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A TREATISE

ON THE

IMMORALITY OF IDOLATRY.

"FOR THIS CAUSE GOD SHALL SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION, THAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE A LIE."—2 Thessalonians, ii. 11.

SECTION ONE:

THE METAPHYSICS OF CHRISTIANITY.

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CONTENTS.

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CHAPTER I. PAGE

Scientific Standards of Truth 1

CHAPTER II.

Scientific Theology and Metaphysical Science . . 38

CHAPTER III.

Faith, Reason, and Revelation 74

CHAPTER IV.

The Foundations of Morality 112

CHAPTER V.

Idealism 149

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST SECTION.

The accompanying five papers form the first section of an unpublished work on Metaphysics and Theology. The complete work consists of a preliminary dissertation, preface, introduction, ten sections, and conclusion. The first section, made up of the accompanying five chapters, deals with the subject of the metaphysics of Christianity.

The work is complete in MS., but stands in need of revision, and this pamphlet contains the revision of the first section.

The work is called "A Treatise on the Immorality of Idolatry, being a Manual of Scientific Theology and Metaphysical Science for the use of Laymen." The idea of the book was suggested by a passage in the writings of Mr. James Anthony Froude. Mr. Froude, in one of his short essays on Great Subjects, discusses the future prospects of Protestantism in England, and arrives at the con-

clusion that religion in this country—if it is to be saved from destruction—must be taken in hand by the laity. From the clergy of the different churches, sects and denominations, there is nothing to be hoped. He writes:—"We have no hope from theologians, to whatever school they may belong. They and all belonging to them are given over to their own dreams, and they cling to them with a passion proportionate to the weakness of their arguments. There is yet a hope—it is but a faint one—that the laity, who are neither divines nor philosophers, may take the matter into their own hands, as they did at the Reformation."

Now, it is obvious to all readers of this passage that the laity may "take the matter into their own hands," and yet not follow slavishly the precedent set at the Reformation. The theological chaos in which European civilization is now floundering, does not suggest the idea that the methods of the Reformation were so perfect as to make it desirable to initiate a new reformation on the same lines. Knowledge of human nature and experience of history combine to prove that lay interference with the Church is not likely to do much good. A far better way for the laity to take matters into their own hands would be for laymen to study theology for themselves and teach their

own children the truth. The children thus instructed would be the clergy of the future, and even the theologians of the present day, from whom Mr. Froude has no hope, being guided like the rest of mankind by the instinct of self-preservation, may be trusted in time to forsake their dreams which they mistake for realities, and to teach the truth. This explains the meaning of the term "scientific theology."

If, as is proposed here, the laity should take matters into their own hands by the simple method of learning the truth themselves and then teaching it to their children, the theology which they would learn and teach would be something differing widely from what is now taught as "theology" by the churches and sects.

In order, therefore, to distinguish between these two theologies, the former is called in this book scientific theology. So much for the way in which the idea of the work was suggested to the writer. The purpose of the book is to explain what scientific theology is, and how it differs from the scholastic theology of the churches and sects.

As regards treatment of the subject, the importance of the metaphysical axiom of idealism as a factor in all problems connected with scientific theology, is a point strongly insisted on in the

present work. To some extent this idea also has been suggested by the writings of Mr. Froude.

One of Mr. Froude's short studies on great subjects is devoted to "Criticism and the Gospel History." In this essay there are quoted certain sayings attributed to Jesus Christ, that are found in early ecclesiastical writing other than those named after the four evangelists.

Among these sayings attributed to Jesus Christ there is one recorded in the writings of Clement of Rome, and repeated in those of Clement of Alexandria. The passage is as follows:—"The Lord being asked when His kingdom should come, said, 'when two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within, and the male with the female neither male nor female.'" Mr. Froude introduces this passage with the remark, "Yet no hypothesis will explain the most strange words which follow." Then comes the above quotation. But why should Mr. Froude say that no hypothesis will explain the words? They clearly refer to idealism. When idealism shall come—when revelation shall be interpreted by the hypothesis of idealism, as it is now vainly attempted to be interpreted by that of materialism, then the kingdom of God shall come. When two, matter and spirit, shall be recognized as one, and the external universe which is outside

consciousness shall be known to be a form of idea such as is within consciousness, and when theology shall be understood to be one with religion—neither theology separate from religion nor religion separate from theology—then the kingdom of God shall come. All these conditions are fulfilled under the hypothesis of idealism. Under the idealistic hypothesis the two are one. Matter and mind are one, because matter is a mode of consciousness. For the same reason that which is without is identical with that which is within. The forces of nature which are without or outside of us, are identical with that which wells up within ourselves in the form of consciousness.*

The male is one with the female neither male nor female. The male and female are respectively the forces of reason and sentiment in regard to the supernatural or—to give them the names by which they are usually called—theology and religion. Under the existing hypothesis of scholastic materialism, theology and religion are distinct from each other, the former consisting of scholastic dogmas which religion may accept if she pleases, but which also she may practically ignore. Under the hypo-

* This has been pointed out, if we mistake not, by Mr. Herbert Spencer. The important point, however, is that it is true.

thesis of idealism the science of theology becomes the correct interpretation of analogy, and the truths of theology become the allegorical statements of the etchical and spiritual truths of religion. It is not pretended that this interpretation exhausts the meanings of the remarkable passage quoted by Mr. Froude. It has probably other deeper and more hidden significations, but it carries this meaning upon its surface.

Besides Mr. Froude's writings, Professor Drummond's book on natural law in the spiritual world helped to suggest the present treatment of our subject. The phrase, "natural law in the spiritual world," expresses a proposition which is true, but the truth cannot be deduced—as Mr. Drummond vainly tries to deduce it—from the premisses of scholastic materialism. The hopelessness of Mr. Drummond's reasoning is mercilessly exposed in a review of his book which, under the title of "Dogma in Masquerade," was published in the *Westminster Review*.

Perhaps the above will be deemed a sufficient explanation of the appearance of this pamphlet. It is not necessary to apologize for its defects of style, or for its numerous repetitions of self-evident truisms. It is a sufficient condonation of these

to say that the work is not a contribution to literature, but to science. Theology is a natural science, and of that science this book professes to be a manual and nothing more. One word on the subject of originality may be permitted before this preface closes. No originality is claimed for anything in this work. The illustrations are taken from the current periodical literature of the moment, and most of the ideas that are used here in support of truth and in refutation of error, as well as occasionally the language in which they are expressed, are taken from the same source. We, in fact, take existing controversy as we find it, and simply re-adjust some of the propositions of which it consists. The process of doing this discloses the quaint fact that many arguments that are used against theology by contemporary sceptical schools of philosophy are not only true, but are also themselves dogmas of scientific Christianity. The obvious conclusion is that the propositions of scholastic divinity that are overthrown by these arguments, have no moral right to be called "Christianity." This fact furnishes the key to the name of the work. One may dispute particular concrete applications of the following abstract proposition, but the proposition itself, regarded as

an abstract proposition, will probably be admitted to be impregnable.

To teach, under the authority of the name of "Christianity," propositions which are not true, is to add to the immorality of teaching what is false the immorality of taking the name of Christ in vain.

This double immorality constitutes the "immorality of idolatry."

CHAPTER I.

Scientific Standards of Truth.

"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments."—Exodus, xx. 4, 5, 6.

In the month of December, 1885, a remarkable letter appeared in the *Times* on the subject of science and politics. The writer, who concealed his name, drew attention to a fact of great importance to mankind. That fact is that the value of physical science is wholly misunderstood by the multitude. The popular idea is that physical science has added enormously to the material well-being of the human race, and that with these benefits its useful functions in the history of mankind begin and end. No doubt it has done this; and much as it has done in this direction during the last fifty years, it is probable that it will do still more during the fifty years to come. But, as

the writer in the *Times* points out, all this which it has done and may still be about to do, is as a drop of water to the ocean in comparison with what it has done for the moral discipline of the human mind. The true value of modern science is ethical rather than physical, and even ethical rather than intellectual. Its intellectual value, great as it undoubtedly is, is, in comparison with its moral value, so infinitesimal that it may be disregarded.

Physical science gives us standards of truth that are catholic in the true sense of that word. They are universal, realizing the idea expressed in the phrase, *Quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod ab omnibus*, accessible to all men, absolute, and from them there is no appeal. Grand as they are, and sublime as is the work on which they are engaged, they are the same standards, ethics and criteria of truth that common sense applies to the most trivial affairs of daily life. It is well to avoid attaching an esoteric or, so to speak, specialist's meaning to the term science. Science simply means knowledge, and scientific methods of reasoning and investigation are merely the methods of common sense enlarged and carefully applied.

Modern science furnishes us with standards of truth which are as applicable to the great metaphysical sciences of theology and politics as to that which deals with the natural universe. In this way, by teaching men the nature of truth, modern science is rendering high service to the cause of

morality, because truth is the foundation of morality, and apart from truth there is and can be no such thing as morality. Modern science is, in fact, as a teacher of ethics the successor of the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages. Its language has the same definite dogmatic ring, and it opposes to the dishonest compromises of Anglican Protestantism and political liberalism a sterner *non possumus* than even that of the Vatican itself.

It is important to recognize the moral value of modern science as distinguished, not merely from its physical, but also from its intellectual value. It is not unusual to hear physical science praised in a somewhat patronizing and supercilious tone on account of its intellectual discipline. Undoubtedly its intellectual value is very great, but its intellectual, like its physical value, is infinitesimal in comparison with its moral usefulness as an inculcator of correct standards of truth. It is not possible to exaggerate its value in this respect. If physical science is daily winning more and more votaries from the churches and sects to the cause of intellectual honesty in metaphysics, this takes place in obedience to a natural law. The mind of man, both in the aggregate race and the individual, is as much under the dominion of natural law as his physical frame, and the action of science as a solvent in the disintegration of systems of metaphysical disingenuousness takes place in obedience to what may be called "Natural law in the spiritual

world." Now this natural law in the spiritual world determines morality, and is, in fact, the agent that carries out the moral government of the world; and it is this moral government of the world that is called in the book of Psalms the "judgments" of God. "Thy judgments are far above out of his sight, and therefore defieth he all his enemies."* This text might be applied to the ecclesiastical blindness which in the nineteenth century prevents distinguished representatives of the Church of England from recognizing the ethical value of modern science.

Morality, including truth, whether called by that name or not, or recognized as such or not, is a real objective metaphysical entity, and as such exercises a cosmic power of attraction over the aggregate human mind. Similarly immorality, including untruth, whether called by that name or not, is a real objective entity, and as such exercises a cosmic power of repulsion over the aggregate human mind. This fact accounts for the phenomenon that has been noticed.

It should be remembered that in true metaphysics, whether sacred or secular, the determination of what morality, including truth, is or is not does not rest ultimately with Church or State, or law, or social custom, but is determined by observation of natural laws regarded as expressing the will of God. The natural law referred to here is

* Psalms, x. 5.

that already mentioned that reigns in the spiritual realm of the human mind. Even when its existence is recognized it is not usually called natural law, but it has the same right to that name as the natural law of the physical universe. It may be convenient to say here that the term natural law in this work generally refers to psychological law, or to that semi-psychical semi-physiological natural law that governs the impulses, instincts, and motives of mankind, enabling human actions to be reasoned about, predicted and recorded in statistics almost as if the elements of human consciousness and free-will had no control over historical phenomena.

The power of modern science as an ethical solvent for metaphysical disingenuousness is all the more significant that the term "morality" is never mentioned in connection with physical science, while the churches and sects whose view of what truth is differs from that of science, habitually pose as the source and fountain-head of ethics. Truth is the foundation of morality and, apart from truth, there is and can be no morality. The "note" of physical science is absolute unswerving fidelity and devotion to truth. Its reward already accomplished is the intellectual empire of the world, and the moral empire is following, as it was bound to do sooner or later. It is a natural law (using the word in the sense already explained) that intellectual and moral influence cannot be permanently separated.

The Church of England mourns over her loss of influence over the educated classes of the country. The reason is that she has lost her intellectual empire, and the two are inseparable. Perhaps some day her eyes may be opened and she may see that her loss of moral influence is what she deserves, and is, in fact, a part of that moral government of the world that the Psalmist calls the "judgments" of God; and adds, as if to explain the blindness of the Church of England, that they are far above out of the sight of some human beings, and presumably also of some human institutions. In the meantime we may without irreverence imagine the Almighty saying to modern science, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things"—truth in things temporal—"I will make thee ruler over many things," the intellect, conscience and imagination of mankind.

The prediction that modern science will in due time obtain a complete empire over the conscience and imagination of mankind does not mean that physical science will ever supersede religion and theology. It means that in due time the Church will be compelled by her own natural instinct of self-preservation to apply correct standards of truth to the propositions of theology. To some extent this is already being done by the Church of England. In the autumn of 1887 three sermons were preached by three distinguished prelates of the Established Church, which drew from so high

an authority as Professor Huxley the admission that in them religion and theology conceded to modern science every position that the latter has a right to claim. It may be that in these sermons the fidelity of the bishops to correct standards of truth in their interpretation of the Bible was purchased at some sacrifice of loyalty to the doctrines of their Church, but this is a matter that only concerns them personally. In an ideal Church fidelity to ecclesiastical doctrine and to scientific standards of truth would coincide.

There never was a time in the history of civilization when fidelity to correct standards of truth in metaphysics was more necessary than now. Protestantism in theology has generated Liberalism in politics, by both of which disingenuousness in metaphysical thought is consecrated as a sacred principle. The phrase metaphysical thought covers the two fields of theology and politics, two branches of metaphysics between which the closest organic relationship exists. The condition in England at this moment of the two great metaphysical sciences of theology and politics is a scandal to civilization and a disgrace to the country. A lying spirit, so powerful as to suggest the idea of its being the Father of Lies himself, seems to have got this nation by the throat, and to be strangling its existence as an intellectual, moral, and spiritual organic unit in the family of nations.

The foundations of civil society are being gradually undermined by a system of party government

than which no more appalling tyranny ever masqueraded as freedom. Of "religious liberty" the nation has probably attained its ideal now that every baseless superstition and exploded paganism that ignorance and fanaticism choose to dig out of dead men's brains and express in the scriptural vocabulary is accepted as Christian theology. Under this ideal of religious liberty it is not surprising that scepticism, atheism and infidelity should flourish and be on the increase. To this state of things may be traced a peculiar phrase often met with in current literature, a "conflict between religion and science." A very little reflection suffices to show that this phrase has no meaning. The phrase—a conflict between religion and science—expresses a contradiction in terms. What is religion? It is defined as follows by the Apostle St. James. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* There can be no conflict between religion so defined and modern science. Nor is a conflict possible between theology and science, provided the former be a true scientific theology and not a "science falsely so called."† Natural science is a branch of theology, as geometry is a branch of mathematics. The phrase, therefore—a conflict between theology and science—is as much a contradiction in terms as the phrase a conflict between geometry and mathematics.

* James, i. 27. † 1 Timothy, vi. 20.

The conflict that is, in fact, in progress is one between modern science and an erroneous theology built by the European Church upon the foundation of a mistaken interpretation of Scripture.

As, however, science itself is a branch of true theology, the actual conflict is between true and erroneous theology, or, in scriptural language, between theology and idolatry. Theology, like all other sciences, consists of propositions, and in each of these the right to the title of theology depends upon the truth or untruth of the proposition. If it is true it is theology. If it is not true it is idolatry. Much misconception exists on this point, even among educated men trained to scientific reasoning in other fields of human thought. In an article that appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* in the month of October, 1887, a distinguished writer, of great eminence in the law, committed himself to the strange view that if certain miracles that are apparently recorded in the Gospels as having actually occurred did not in fact occur, "theology" must fall to the ground. This is a strange error. The only consequence that would follow in the supposed case is that certain propositions in theology would have to be reconstructed. Mathematicians often make a mistake in a problem, but their error does not have the effect of abolishing the science of mathematics. The popular notion respecting theology is due to a peculiar fallacy inseparable from the teaching of

Protestantism, which tends to convey the idea that any proposition, whether it be true or false, is "theology," if only it be expressed in the vocabulary of Scripture, or in language flavoured with ecclesiastical sentiment. This idea is incorrect, and is the parent of what is known to modern metaphysics as "cant." The true meaning of the word theology is different. The term is derived from two Greek words signifying God and reason. Practically any proposition that is true and that relates to God is theology.

In conventional language the term theology is used to denote certain forms of crystallized ecclesiastical speculation respecting things which it has pleased God in His wisdom to keep secret from mankind. These speculations, conventionally termed "doctrines," are what are described allegorically in the Second Commandment as graven images of things in heaven. The natural laws that govern the growth and development of the religious consciousness in the mind of the human race are, as it were, so framed as to prevent these crystallized human speculations, conventionally termed "creeds," from being used permanently as bonds of union among mankind. They serve that purpose temporarily, but sooner or later disintegration sets in. The Christian revelation itself superseding the Old Testament, the Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and what is called Nonconformity or Dissent among

ourselves, are examples of the working of the law of evolution in things spiritual; and the crystallized speculations of Churches and sects respecting matters which God in His wisdom has seen fit to keep secret from mankind are the modern forms of what are called in the Second Commandment graven images of things in heaven. In conventional theology the term graven images of things in heaven is supposed to refer to works of art in ecclesiastical buildings. The other, however, is the true interpretation of the Second Commandment. The true exegesis of Scripture must be sought in the study of natural law. The commandments of God ultimately, as it were, fulfil themselves by the destruction of what is forbidden. Hence in scriptural ethics, as in natural science, truth must be sought for and not manufactured artificially. In scriptural language, truth in faith and morals must not be "made with men's hands."

Practically theology is a name for all truth viewed in its relation to God, and might be defined as the truth concerning God. Artificial theology is frequently "theology" only on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle. Artificial theology, or theology made with men's hands, is idolatry. It is called by the Apostle St. Peter "private interpretation"* of Scripture. All these metaphysical terms have the same meaning. Graven images of things in heaven, and "private" interpretations of Scrip-

* 2 Peter, i. 20.

ture, are the scriptural names for what is called among ourselves orthodox theology. It is a theology arrived at, so to speak, either by a fictitious human "authority" or by human agreement, and has no point of contact with scriptural theology except the vocabulary which it misapplies and uses without moral right. All conventional theology, whether orthodox or not, is theology made with men's hands, in which the idea of God is separated from the idea of first cause of natural phenomena. Revealed theology is that under which it is affirmed that true reasoning by analogy from natural theology has the authority of a revelation from God. The whole of the teaching of Christ, when submitted to metaphysical analysis, is found to be reasoning by analogy from natural theology, and this is the only Christianity that the Bible teaches. The conventional Christianity that is taught by the Church of England is what is personified in the New Testament under the name of Antichrist. Antichrist in the New Testament is not, as is popularly but erroneously supposed, the name of an individual, but is an allegorical term used to express the personification of artificial theology, or theology made with "men's hands."*

The substitution by the Church of England of artificial for scriptural theology causes much confusion in the popular mind as to what theological doctrine really is. Take, for instance, the doctrine

* Psalms, cxv. 4.

of evolution and the doctrine of transubstantiation. Most people would call the latter a theological doctrine, but would deny that title to the doctrine of evolution. In fact, however, evolution is a true dogma of natural theology, and the dogma of transubstantiation, though conventionally called "theology," is not theology at all.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is artificial theology, or theology made with men's hands. Another difference between scientific and artificial theology consists in this, that the latter is invariably subjective, while the former is objective. For instance, in the latter, discussion busies itself about what people believe, in the former only about what is true. All new Churches set to work to formulate a "body of belief," and by the act of doing so, sow, as it were, the seed of cancer in their own hearts; for belief follows natural psychological laws. Subjective theology is what is called in Scripture idolatry. Men have believed, and have persuaded other men to believe, that sticks and stones are gods; but their belief has never had the effect of turning the sticks and stones into gods. The difference between scientific and artificial theology is well illustrated by some essays that were published in one or two of the leading reviews of this country at the end of 1885 and beginning of 1886. The first of these, on "The Dawn of Creation and Worship," appeared in the issue of the *Nineteenth Century* of November, 1885, and

was written by Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone, in regard to metaphysical truth and facts, in both the domains of theology and politics, has the misfortune to suffer from a form of colour-blindness which causes truth and facts to appear to him always something different from, and generally the contradictions of, what they appear to other people. This colour-blindness,* expressed in a magnificent rhetoric, has a great fascination for the multitude, and has earned for Mr. Gladstone the reputation of a great statesman and a great theologian. The article in the *Nineteenth Century* was written in Mr. Gladstone's usual style. As in political matters he is in the habit of invoking "morality" as a witness in his favour, so in the theological essay under consideration he called upon natural science to support some erroneous conclusions. This drew forth a reply from Professor Huxley, which was published in the December number of the same periodical. It was entitled "The Interpreters of Genesis and the Interpreters of Nature," and contained a refutation of Mr. Gladstone's statements about the order observed by the Almighty in the creation of the world. These two articles illustrate very clearly the difference between true and artificial theology.

* This metaphor of colour-blindness has been used by a distinguished political opponent of Mr. Gladstone to illustrate the latter's unfortunate defects of ethical and spiritual vision.

The multitude would probably describe Mr. Gladstone's article as a splendid contribution to theological literature. On the other hand, they would never think of applying the term "theology" to Mr. Huxley's writings, and it is only due to the learned professor to add that he himself would be unlikely to use the word "theology" to describe his own essay.

In fact, however, Mr. Huxley's article was, and Mr. Gladstone's was not, theology. The former was true natural theology expressed in a secular vocabulary; the latter was vague sentiment and rhetoric expressed in the vocabulary of theology. Mr. Gladstone's paper contained no definite information at all, and its statements of physical fact were erroneous. Professor Huxley's essay was a clear statement of genuine facts about the creation of the world; its tone was judicial and its refutation of Mr. Gladstone's errors was complete.

In the great intellectual warfare of the nineteenth century, that is erroneously termed a conflict between religion and science, the first chapter of Genesis is a favourite battle-field. This of course is only natural, but in fact the first chapter of Genesis is only the introduction to revelation. It is, as it were, the vestibule of revelation. The Bible is the channel of revealed theology. It is not the channel of natural theology except in so far as we derive the idea of a Divine Personality behind creation from the Bible. Scientific knowledge, coupled with the

belief that natural phenomena are the work of God, constitutes natural theology. Belief in the underlying principle of the parables of Christ, that true reasoning by analogy from things temporal to things eternal is confirmed by Divine authority, constitutes belief in revealed theology. This is the difference between natural and revealed theology, and other than this there is and can be no such thing as revealed theology. All other so-called "revelation" is spurious. It is composed of what the Second Commandment terms "graven images" of things in heaven. It is what the Apostle St. Peter calls "private interpretation" of Scripture. It is, in fact, artificial doctrine, or theology made with men's hands; in a word, idolatry. It will be seen that physical science is closely related to natural theology, is, in fact, natural theology expressed in secular language. It is, however, also closely related to revealed theology. The doctrine of evolution is not only a doctrine of natural theology, but it also belongs to revealed theology. The form which human belief in God assumes at any given moment in history is the outcome of countless centuries of evolution. Evolution, therefore, is as much a fact of revealed as it is of natural theology. There are, in fact, three kinds of evolution corresponding to the triple form in which God manifests Himself to the intellect, conscience, and imagination of mankind. These are physical evolution, ethical

evolution, and spiritual evolution. The first of these is the form of evolution that is investigated by natural science. The second relates to the growth and development of the human conscience, of what Kant has called the "sense of moral responsibility" in man. The third is the growth and development of the conception of God in the imagination of mankind. Under each of its three forms evolution acts in obedience to natural law. Scientific theology, accordingly, may be defined as the correct interpretation of analogy in reasoning from things temporal to things eternal. It is the development of the metaphysical idea that underlies the parables of Christ. In scientific theology, as in the parables, analogy does duty for argument. It is, therefore, essential that the analogies should be correct. Hence, the standards of truth used in theology must be the same as in natural science, where also analogy carries great weight. It is at the same time well to remember that truth which is determined by other standards has no claim to be called truth at all. It is truth "falsely so called," and all teaching in which the term "truth" is used to denote conclusions arrived at by the use of any other standards and criteria, is immoral and doomed to disintegration. All sectarianism, political and ecclesiastical, is the result of infidelity to correct standards of truth.

The looseness of Protestant theology has generated the daily increasing demoralization of the

public mind with regard to truth in politics. The wholesale demoralization of the English electorate by political fallacy-mongering is rapidly assuming the proportions of a national danger, and may be traced as effect to cause to the erroneous teaching of the English Church. The application to the interpretation of Scripture of scientific standards of truth, leads to the discovery of two fixed metaphysical principles as the bases of revelation. These are idealism and evolution. The term evolution is so well known that it will not be necessary to say very much about it here.

The chief thing necessary to remember is that in ordinary language it is assumed that processes of evolution work, as it were, automatically. For instance, if in due course of evolution two phenomena succeed each other, it is assumed that the first carries within itself a power or "potency" to evolve the second. This assumption in the case of physical science is only a working hypothesis, as physical science concerns itself only with what things do, and not with why they do them. In popular language and current literature this assumption seems to be a fixed belief. It is, in fact, an error, being a form, or a part, of the larger erroneous belief called materialism. That it is an erroneous belief becomes self-evident to anyone who can obtain a firm intellectual grasp of the other metaphysical principle that has just been mentioned—the principle of idealism.

Nor need we say much here about this latter principle, as it is fully explained elsewhere in the present volume. The phenomena of evolution are apparently automatic, but are not really so. Hence, in scientific theology the term is not used to denote an automatic process, but an effect, of which the cause is the volition of God. This same Divine volition is the first cause of all natural phenomena. Hence no theological conception of God can be correct which does not coincide with the idea of natural causation; and, by reading between the lines of the first chapter of Genesis, it is seen that the God of the Hebrew Scriptures is natural causation personified. Our reason also tells us that there can be no other God than this. Hence, the God of the Hebrew Scriptures is the only living and true God. Natural causation personified, however, is a theological rather than a religious conception. For purposes of personal religion the Gospels convey Divine permission to think of God under the more finite form of a man, and the type of human character under which God, who is a Spirit, may be worshipped in spirit and in truth is revealed in the Jesus Christ of the New Testament. When the three principles of idealism, evolution and natural causation are thoroughly grasped, the difficulties of scriptural interpretation vanish. The Bible contains no physical revelation at all. It is not a revelation of physical science or history, it is exclusively a

revelation of ethical and spiritual truth, conveyed, as Christ conveyed His teaching, by parable. The physical and historical element in Scripture is *the form* of the revelation; the ethical and spiritual truth symbolized and suggested by the form is *the substance* of the revelation.

No statements, or apparent statements, of physical fact, scientific or historical, need be accepted as real statements of facts because they are recorded in Scripture, for Scripture contains no revelation of such matters.

Facts, or apparent facts, of history recorded in Scripture are merely a vesture, rendering visible, as it were, the ethical and spiritual truth that finds expression in human life. There is a mythic element in Scripture. This has been introduced into the canon by the Almighty for the express purpose of revealing to mankind the fact that the Scriptural drama is to be interpreted as parable and not as historical fact. At first sight it seems irreverent to speak dogmatically of the purposes of God. On reflection, however, it will be perceived that it is frequently more irreverent not to do so. As God is the executive of natural causation and the great first cause of all natural phenomena, He must be held to have expressly designed all results that are brought about by natural causes. The mythic element in the Gospels, acting on the human mind in obedience to natural laws, tends to produce in that mind a conviction that the Gospel narrative,

though resting on an historical foundation, is not historical in its superstructure. The Gospels, therefore, must be a parable, and our knowledge of the fact that they are a parable must be accepted as a revelation from God. It must also be believed that in inserting, so to speak, the mythic element in the canon, God did so with express design to reveal to mankind the truth that the Gospels are a parable. As the word "fable" is sometimes applied to the Gospels by opponents of theology, it may be well to state the difference between a fable and a parable. The principle of teaching in both is identical; in both, analogy is substituted for and must be accepted as argument. The term "fable," however, is used where we have to do with lightness of theme and lightness of treatment. Where we have to do with solemnity and seriousness of subject and treatment we use the term "parable."

In order to understand the ethics of theological teaching, it is well to learn to regard lightness and seriousness as objective entities in the sense in which mathematical terms express objective entities. You can then define fable as allegory or analogy plus lightness of subject and treatment, and parable as allegory or analogy plus solemnity and seriousness of subject and treatment. The two things, accordingly, are essentially different. The element of allegory or analogy is common to both, but they have no other point of contact.

To speak, therefore, of such parables as the fall of man in Genesis or the four Gospels as "fables," is as immoral as it would be to call one physical object by the name of another. This form of prostitution of language is, however, habitual in current Protestant theology and Liberal politics. No doubt some of those who misuse language in this way do so unconsciously, or under a mistaken view of right and wrong; but the fact that they do indulge in this habit constitutes a formidable national danger. Another aspect of this question should be mentioned. Christian revelation consists of the ethical and spiritual truth that is conveyed in the Bible by parable or allegory, and other than this they contain no revelation. Now, the moral of a parable is seldom so impressive as that of an historical fact. This, however, is due to the weakness of the human conscience. If the human conscience were strong in its love of truth and right, the moral of a parable would be as strong as that of an actual historical fact. In the supposed case all that the conscience would require would be to have the way of truth and right pointed out to it. Nothing could then cause it to swerve. Unfortunately, in respect of truth and right the human conscience is weak, and is, therefore, less impressed by the indirect moral teaching of parable than by the more direct teaching of hard fact. Hence, it has come to pass that the teachers of what is conventionally accepted as "morality" and "reli-

gion," finding the direct lesson of an historical exegesis of Scripture more impressive than the true exegesis of allegory, have gradually, and no doubt half unconsciously, and under a mistaken view that they were doing right, substituted the former for the latter. This action of theirs has generated the erroneous dogma technically called the plenary inspiration of Scripture. We have seen that to call scriptural parable a fable is to make an immoral misuse of language. It is an equally immoral misuse of language in an opposite direction to apply the term "Divine revelation" to what is merely the historical form of parable.

These distinctions lie at the root of the ethics of scientific theology, and are closely bound up with the subject of the immorality of idolatry. In fact, the immoral misuse of language that arises from neglect of them constitutes one of the most dangerous forms of the immorality of idolatry. A clear comprehension of the ethics of theological teaching, as just explained, and of the metaphysical conceptions called evolution and idealism, together with appreciation of the axiomatic character of the proposition, that no theological conception of God which separates the idea of Him from the idea of natural causation personified can possibly be true, are all that are required by the student to enable him to understand the true science of theology.

As regards evolution there is this difficulty to

be dealt with, that almost every one who uses the term attaches his own meaning to it. In scriptural theology the dogma of evolution should be considered in connection with idealism, which, equally with evolution, is one of the fundamental dogmas belonging to a true exegesis of Scripture. They affect scriptural interpretation in this way. They compel recognition of the eternity of matter as a dogma of theology. What has been taking place in the physical universe throughout a past eternity has practically little interest for mankind until the planet on which man was in due time to make a brief appearance began to assume its present form; and the term, "the beginning," in the book of Genesis alludes to the time when this was beginning to take place. Matter is eternal, and the material atoms of which this planet is composed assumed in due time their present form, and then scriptural revelation began. It is well, in this connection, to remember the fundamental axiom of Christian theology, that the Bible is the Word of God. Obviously this must mean that a true interpretation of Scripture is the Word of God. It can hardly mean that an incorrect interpretation of Scripture is the Word of God. The popular view of creation is that God made matter out of nothing, and then made the world out of matter. But the Bible does not tell us that God made matter out of nothing, and then made the world out of matter. What the Bible does tell us is that "in the

beginning God created the heaven and the earth,"* and this passage is just as accurate a description of the Divine action as first cause of the evolution of the physical universe as it would be of the popular, or "carpenter," theory of creation.

While on this subject it may be well to refer to the popular error that the writings of Mr. Darwin and Mr. Herbert Spencer are hostile to Christianity. The truths of evolution, which are really very old truths indeed, and have only been worked out in detail and popularised by Mr. Darwin, are assumed as self-evident axioms in scriptural revelation. Many passages in the Psalms, the Sermon on the Mount, and the parables of Christ require the doctrine of evolution to explain them, and without that doctrine they have no meaning. The Scriptures assume the truth of metaphysical or spiritual, as well as of physical, evolution. The parable of the grain of mustard seed describes the process of evolution of the Christian idea in the religious consciousness of Gentile civilization. The passage, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,"† read in the light of the rest of the New Testament as context, and in the light of our knowledge of subsequent history during nineteen hundred years as interpretation, refers unmistakably to the analogy between physical and metaphysical evolution. The passage, "My Father worketh hitherto," refers to the physical evolution of species culminating in

* Genesis, i. 1. † St. John, v. 17.

man. The phrase, "I work," alludes to the evolution of a new type of character through the working of the Christian idea in the religious consciousness of mankind. This idea of a new type of character, a new spiritual or metaphysical species, as it were, is also the underlying idea of all those allusions in the Gospel of St. John to "new birth" and to being "born again."

The assumption of the truth of the doctrine of evolution in the Bible escapes observation owing to the fact that in the teaching of the Church the religious sentiment of the people has been used as an argument against the truths of evolution. The Third Commandment is a prohibition of the immorality of using the religious sentiment of the people to strangle their intelligence. The religious sentiment of the people should be separated from doubtful propositions in physics and history and from controversy, and should only be invoked in support of settled conclusions. The writings of Mr. Darwin are in perfect harmony with scriptural revelation, and the same may be said of Mr. Herbert Spencer's psychological facts. The inferences and conclusions, however, of the latter distinguished philosopher are sometimes open to criticism. There are few among the mysteries in the midst of which we live and move and have our being more wonderful than the completeness with which difference of species among animals corresponds to difference of character and type between different sorts and

conditions of men; and as the evolution of physical species culminates in man, so the evolution of spiritual or metaphysical species or types of human character culminates in the Christian. God in His capacity of the Father is the first cause of the phenomena of physical evolution. God in His capacity of the Son is the first cause of metaphysical evolution. Moreover, the two processes of evolution have been continuous; the physical throughout a past eternity, and the metaphysical since the advent of the Christian revelation. This is the meaning of the saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The Christian revelation is a revelation by parable of the mode in which the law of evolution affects the spiritual element in man.

Christianity, accordingly, is a revelation by parable of a part of the catholic law of the universe. Hence, our reason for believing it to be true is the same as our reason for believing in any other fact of natural law. As regards those truths which are apprehended by faith, and not by sight, we may compare our reason for believing in them to our reason for believing that the sun will rise tomorrow morning. We cannot predicate absolute certainty about any future event, not even about the rising of the sun; but practically we feel as certain of the rising of the sun on future mornings as we do of the present fact of our own existence.

In the same way practical certainty may be felt

in the existence of objective realities corresponding to the great conceptions and religious hopes and fears of scriptural Christianity. The Gospel parables are examples of reasoning by analogy from things temporal to things eternal. If we develop this idea by reasoning by analogy from evolution in the natural world, we arrive necessarily at evolution in the spiritual world. The saying, "Many be called, but few chosen,"* is a spiritual truth corresponding to the natural truth expressed in the phrase "natural selection." In strict theology the phrases Divine choice and natural selection mean the same thing. All natural action is the action of God. Natural selection, therefore, and Divine choice must mean the same thing. In popular language this meaning does not attach to the phrase natural selection; but that is a misfortune for the popular language. In the popular speech the phrase "natural selection" has been given an esoteric subjective meaning. This is due to the erroneous teaching of the Church, which has separated in the popular mind the idea of God from the idea of first cause of natural phenomena. This teaching is immoral, and is the particular form of immorality that is prohibited in the First Commandment of the Christian Decalogue. As in the popular theology the Second Commandment is interpreted as the prohibition of works of art in ecclesiastical buildings, so the first has also been

* St. Matthew, xx. 16.

given a subjective sectarian meaning, each Church and sect reading it as a prohibition of the gods of other Churches and sects. This interpretation is erroneous. The First Commandment is a prohibition of the immorality of separating in the consciousness of mankind the idea of God from the idea of first cause of natural phenomena. God manifests Himself firstly in His works, in the facts, forces, and laws of the universe; secondly, in human history; and thirdly, in Scripture; and scriptural revelation must be interpreted and corrected by the first and second manifestations. This is the meaning of the First Commandment of the Christian Decalogue. Those who in spiritual evolution are naturally selected or divinely chosen for eternal life, or as they are in fact called in Scripture, the "elect" of God, inherit eternal life by natural causation.

The use in this connection of the anthropomorphous idea of reward and punishment is misleading. The scriptural idea is that of a covenant between God and man. This is, in fact, a meaning of the word Testament. The Old Testament was the old covenant and the New Testament is the new covenant. The idea of the New Testament is that God makes a compact or covenant with individual men and women, that under certain conditions they shall be selected for eternal life. If they fulfil these conditions they will be selected. If they do not fulfil them they will not be selected.

It is, of course, possible to attach the anthropomorphous idea of reward to selection, and that of punishment to non-selection; but all such use of these terms is allegorical, as it would be if they were used in connection with any other form of natural causation. The fact that scriptural passages relating to reward and punishment are allegorical is very clearly shown in the parable of Christ where the labourers go to work in the vineyard. If eternal life were a matter of reward the labourers who came early in the day would have been entitled to a higher reward than those who came at the eleventh hour. As, however, it was a matter of contract, those who came at the eleventh hour were placed on the same footing as those who had borne the burden and heat of the day. There is something miraculous in the completeness with which the Christian revelation anticipates, as it were, in every detail of spiritual analogy all our nineteenth century knowledge respecting the law of evolution.

The ecclesiastical doctrine of reward and punishment is true in the sense that the anthropomorphous idea is the finite root or germ of the infinite idea of natural causation. It is lawful to teach it to children or to imperfectly educated persons who cannot understand nice metaphysical distinctions, but the mind should be gradually trained to outgrow the idea and to take in the more fully developed idea of natural causation. Religion and

theology cannot be taught without anthropomorphism, but anthropomorphism in theology can never be true except as allegory. The scholastic doctrine of rewards and punishments, besides being a contradiction of the teaching of analogy and therefore of the fundamental principle of the Christian revelation, is besides a most dangerous doctrine; as, indeed, false doctrines invariably are. For instance, men often argue in this way. They say, "Other men commit such and such a sin; God cannot punish it very severely." In this way men learn to condone to themselves much of their own wickedness. The case, however, assumes a more formidable aspect when it is looked at in the light of a covenant or compact to which the party on the superhuman side is the executive of natural law; and this is the teaching of Scripture. In the New Testament covenant the conditions of eternal life relate exclusively to life, character and conduct, and have nothing to do with speculative belief on matters outside of the range of the human intellect or, if not beyond that range, that fall properly within the provinces of physical science and history. The application of scientific standards of truth to scriptural interpretation involves also the following correction of the popular idea of revelation.

In scholastic theology revelation relates to matters that lie outside of the sphere of action of the human reason. True theology is an appeal

to the human reason, conscience, and imagination. Scriptural revelation, therefore, requires support from sources external to the Bible. For instance, we do not believe the fundamental dogma of Jewish theology, that God is natural causation only because the Bible tells us so, but also because the teaching of the Bible is confirmed by our reason. The creator, sustainer, and governor of the universe is natural causation. If, then, natural causation be not a person there can be no God. If there is a God natural causation must be a person, and God in theology must be conceived of as natural causation personified.

This, of course, also fixes the meaning of the First Commandment, and, indeed, of scriptural revelation generally. From the First Commandment it follows that if we separate any idea of scriptural revelation from the idea of natural causation, or interpret any theological dogma otherwise than as an allegorical revelation of some detail of the catholic law of the universe, and as the correlative to some ascertained physical law, we must be guilty of idolatry. Scientific theology, it should be understood, does not so much affirm that this exegesis is objectively true as that no other exegesis can possibly be true. True scientific theology is, in fact, rather negative than positive. It is more akin to the Protestantism of the Reformation than to Roman Catholic theology. It is, indeed, the true development of the Protestantism

of the Reformation, being the continuation of the idea of bringing religion back from the region of ecclesiastical dreams of the miraculous power of priests and the magic power of material symbols, and reattaching it to Scripture and to natural analogy and the realities and facts of the universe.

As a rule, society ignores the injury that is inflicted upon itself by the immorality of ecclesiastical idolatry, as that immorality does not appreciably affect the personal morality of individuals. The evil really tells when it becomes necessary to apply the code of spurious ethics that is the outcome of ecclesiastical idolatry on a large scale, as in politics, legislation, and administration. Even then, as the people have no training in scientific metaphysics, the evil is not recognized as due to idolatry, or as being the identical form of immorality against which men are mercifully warned by God in the first three Commandments. In the Old Testament we are taught that natural causation is a person. In the New Testament we are taught that the character of that person is the character of Jesus Christ. The Church of England, however, instead of teaching this doctrine, which is reasonable and categorical, sweeps away altogether the idea of natural causation, and by doing so substitutes for the idea of God who is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, the idea of a sentimental humanitarian localized in three-dimensioned space. This con-

ception, which is purely academical and artificial, is arrived at by completely separating the superficial foliage of sentiment in the Gospels from their metaphysical groundwork. The result of this vicious teaching is that the moral law of the Gospel is turned upside down. This is the germ of ethical error in the teaching of the Church, which in every country in Europe brings her more or less into collision with the State. In this country, the ecclesiastical error of substituting a system of artificial, academical ethics for the ethics of Scripture, that rest upon the natural law of the universe results, in the domain of politics, in what is known as "Liberalism."

As in the New Testament the term antichrist is used to personify academical or artificial theology, so Liberalism, being the application to the affairs of state of an artificial system of ethics, may be called the Political Antichrist. The idea personified in Scripture under the name of antichrist is not merely that of substituting artificial for real revelation, but also that of, at the same time, using the vocabulary of the latter to describe the former. Liberalism in politics does exactly the same thing. It habitually uses the vocabulary of the Christian ethics to describe a spurious political morality which is and must ever remain spurious, because it ignores, and even prides itself on ignoring, the principle of natural causation in human affairs. Scientific standards of truth are as essential in

true statesmanship as in true theology; and Liberalism, like academical theology, delights in rejecting them. The Christian ethics are built on the foundation of the idea of human co-operation with God for the promotion of the temporal and eternal happiness of mankind. The fundamental metaphysical principle that underlies the Christian ethics includes this idea, and also the idea of a compact, covenant, or contract between God and man, under which the former binds himself to carry out, without abatement of "jot" or "tittle,"* the principle of natural causation to its ultimate culmination in all the phenomena of the universe—political and historical, as well as physical. Hence, the most fundamental obligation of political morality is recognition of the principle of natural causation in human affairs.

Apart from such recognition there can be no such thing as morality in statesmanship. These are the matters referred to in the three first Commandments, of which also true theology consists. True theology is concerned with the great facts and truths of the universe that come into every domain of human thought, viewed in their relation to God. It has nothing in common with what is conventionally termed "theology" except the vocabulary. The action of the Church in substituting an artificial theology for scriptural revelation has had the effect of leaving politics and

* St. Matthew, v. 18.

political morality to look after themselves. Thus, religion has been rendered in a large measure useless as regards the primary object for which it has been revealed to mankind by God.

In conclusion of the present remarks on scientific standards of truth, it may be observed that the Second Commandment has many other meanings than those dwelt upon in this chapter.

It is, in fact, one of the most wonderful passages of sacred literature in human language. As, however, its other meanings are too numerous to refer to now, we may limit ourselves here to considering that detail of its interpretation under which it is understood as Divine prohibition of artificial standards of truth in faith and morals. Truth is a "thing in heaven." An artificial or academical standard of truth is therefore a "graven image" of a "thing in heaven." Morality, being merely a name for the law of God as distinguished from the law of man, is also a "thing in heaven." Systems of artificial ethics, accordingly, such as those of an ecclesiastical sect or a political party, in which the idea of the moral law is separated from the idea of the natural results of human actions, are "graven images" of "things in heaven." What are called the "principles" of modern political Liberalism, being in fact simply false propositions in ethics, are "graven images" of "things in heaven." The key of scriptural exegesis, and therefore of scientific

theology, will be found in recognition of the fact that from first to last scriptural revelation is allegory and relates exclusively to ethical and spiritual truth. The true exegesis of Scripture, being a part of truth, is "a thing in heaven." An academical or artificial exegesis of Scripture, accordingly, is "a graven image of things in heaven." It is well to remember this whenever we listen to the following solemn words:—

"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments." (Exodus, xx. 4, 5, 6.)

CHAPTER II.

Scientific Theology and Metaphysical Science.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—St. John, iv. 24.

Among the technical terms about to be used in this book are two, "scientific theology" and "metaphysical science," respecting which a few words of explanation are desirable. It will be well to denote the sense in which they are used, rather than to go into the question of their etymological meaning. Metaphysical science is merely a name for the scientific treatment of the ideas or conceptions of the human mind, or, in other words, of forms of consciousness. It is the complement of physical science, which is a name for the scientific treatment of objects of ideas. If we define physical science as the science of the objective, metaphysical science may be defined as the science of the subjective. As the term physical science includes the sciences of astronomy, geology, botany, and many others, so the term metaphysical science includes all sciences dealing with mental processes that may be summed up

in the term psychology. Metaphysical science, accordingly, is concerned with the natural laws that govern the mental processes of the human mind or consciousness, and especially with the law of evolution, which governs the growth and development in the human consciousness of abstract ideas.

The volume of the subjective consciousness of the human race—as well as the mind of the individual—is governed by natural laws which may be compared to the physical laws that rule over the volume of the waters of the ocean. Owing to steam and the electric telegraph, and the consequent rapidity of intellectual communication between nations, it has come to pass in these latter days that, practically, the mind or consciousness of aggregate civilized mankind is, as it were, a single volume of consciousness covering the earth "as the waters cover the sea."* Like the sea, this volume of human consciousness is agitated on the surface by tidal waves. These waves, like those of the ocean, move in obedience to natural laws; and the investigation of these laws constitutes a branch of metaphysical science. Again, these laws, like the natural law of the physical universe, are the expression of the volition or will of God. It follows from these definitions that metaphysical science and scientific theology are the same science seen from different points of view. When we treat of the action of natural laws on the human

* Isaiah, xi. 9. Compare Habakkuk, ii. 14.

consciousness, we are treating of metaphysical science. When we refer that action to its first cause in the Divine volition, we are treating of scientific theology. This treatment of metaphysics and theology does, as a matter of fact, result in a definite dogmatic theology which bears the same relation to modern scientific knowledge that the creed of the Church of Rome of the Middle Ages bore to the cosmic theories of Ptolemy.

It will be seen that the idea of scientific theology is closely related to the idea of "Natural law in the spiritual world" in a different sense from that in which the phrase "Natural law in the spiritual world" is used in Professor Drummond's book of that name. Natural law in the spiritual world is a phrase which properly means not only that the phenomena of worlds beyond the range of human experience are governed by natural laws in the same way as the phenomena of this world; but also that the ideas and conceptions of the human mind, which make up a spiritual world upon earth, are subject to the same control. Both of these conclusions follow from the teaching of Christ. The principle of revelation, consecrated by the parables of Christ, is that of reasoning by analogy from the physical to the metaphysical, and from things temporal to things eternal. When, therefore, we find natural law and evolution the rule in things physical and temporal, we are bound to assume that they are also the rule in things

metaphysical and eternal. This means that, in regard to things eternal and to worlds lying outside of the range of human experience, scientific theology is bound to assume the existence of natural law, throwing the burden of proof on those who deny that existence. This is a matter of great importance, for this is one of the points where genuine scientific theology parts company from the conventional school. The latter is perpetually trying to find breaches of continuity and interruptions, if not reversals and violations, in the uniformity of the natural government of the universe. It has never yet succeeded in proving a breach of continuity, and it is a reasonable prediction that it never will; but it still persists in putting the burden of proof upon modern science, which affirms uniformity, but which cannot, of course, prove a negative. It has no moral right to do this. The burden of proof rests with those who deny uniformity, not with those who assert it. The principle of analogy, consecrated by Christ in His parables as the instrument of revelation, derives its Divine authority from the uniformity of nature, and would lose that authority if a breach of continuity could be discovered anywhere among the works of God. If, therefore, we believe that Christ spoke with a Divine authority, we are bound to believe in the uniformity of nature. As regards the ideas and conceptions of the human mind that make up a spiritual world on earth, we are within

the range of human knowledge, where we can walk by sight without the aid of faith. We know, as matter of ascertained fact and established truth, that the ideas and conceptions of the human mind are subject to natural law. As regards both meanings, accordingly, of the phrase "Natural law in the spiritual world," scientific theology is bound to affirm the existence of law. As regards that spiritual world that lies beyond the range of the human faculties, it infers the existence of natural law in that world by analogy drawn from the teaching of Christ and confirmed by the human reason, and claims a moral right to throw the burden of proof on those who deny the existence of natural law in the spiritual world.

As regards the spiritual world on earth that is composed of the ideas, conceptions, hopes, and fears of the human mind, scientific theology affirms the existence of natural law in that spiritual world as matter of ascertained human knowledge and established truth.

Scriptural revelation includes a revelation, or an unfolding in the religious consciousness of mankind, of certain abstract ethical and spiritual ideas. These abstract ideas constitute the substance of the Christian revelation. The nature of the successive concrete forms in which the abstract truths are temporarily expressed and symbolized is determined by the natural law of evolution. When in the majestic march of evolution increas-

ing knowledge causes the abstract truth to outgrow the concrete form of the moment, the Churches invariably range themselves on the side of idolatry as champions of the concrete against the abstract.

Abstract ideas are developed in the human consciousness in obedience to the law of evolution, but there are what may be called mathematical limits to the development, beyond which the idea cannot pass without, as it were, losing its identity. The human consciousness is composed of ideas, or, to be more strictly accurate, of an underlying constant volume of categorical thought, which does not pass away with the ideas that, as waves, agitate its surface.

Similarly, a man's mind or consciousness is the sum of his ideas, using the term "ideas" to include both kinds of idea, the underlying constant volume of categorical thought and the transitory waves. The difference between these two forms of idea scarcely requires explanation.

The underlying constant volume of categorical thought consists of all the body of unquestioned belief which is the foundation of man's ideas. The axioms of mathematics are examples of the underlying constant volume of categorical thought. Thoughts of passing events that come and go are examples of the transitory waves of thought that agitate the surface of the volume. It will be seen that the scriptural analogy of the ocean and a

constant volume of human thought covering the earth "as the waters cover the sea," is mathematically exact. When in this volume of cosmic human consciousness that covers the earth "as the waters cover the sea," objective truth shall have been substituted for subjective sectarian error, the double prophecy of Isaiah and Habakkuk will be fulfilled. It is well to note that the prophecy is already partially fulfilled. The mind of man does now cover the earth in a continuous volume "as the waters cover the sea." In studying scientific theology it is essential to avoid attaching subjective esoteric meanings to psychological terms. The vocabulary of Scripture, it should be remembered, is a poetical vocabulary used to describe objective metaphysical realities, which may also be called by more prosaic names. Many scriptural terms are, in fact, poetical names for objective realities that are dealt with by the science of psychology; and the objective reality remains the same by whichever name it is called. The term "spirit" is a case in point. The mind, the consciousness, and the spirit of man are merely three different names for the same thing. They are not three separate things. This is a fact of great importance in scientific theology. Not long ago, in the autumn of the year 1887, a distinguished medical authority gave a lecture that was published in the papers, in which he drew a distinction between the mind and the spirit of a

man; and he added that one was and the other was not subject to natural law. This teaching is erroneous with a double error. All the faculties of a man's mind, without exception, are amenable to natural law, and the mind and the spirit of a man are merely two different names for the same thing. The fact that in scholastic theology a distinction is made between the mind and the spirit of a man, coupled with the fact that no such distinction exists, is expressed by saying that the distinction is subjective but not objective. A vast amount of theological error is generated by the practice, common among academical theologians, of treating subjective differences of sentiment and imagination as if they were objective. Another error of the artificial theology, which usually goes hand in hand with the preceding one, is that of materializing the meaning attaching to scriptural terms of which the true meaning is purely ethical or spiritual.

An apparent assumption underlies much of the literature of the Church, that the mind, soul, and spirit of a man are different entities, more or less materialized, dwelling inside the body, one of which, the soul—or the spirit, for there is some confusion between these different entities—comes out of the body at death, and performs what is spoken of as if it were an act of physical locomotion in physical space. This doctrine is a form of materialism, and may be traced to the ecclesiastical habit of interpreting literally the

metaphorical language of Scripture. Materialism in theology generally assumes strange and even grotesque forms. Thus, in popular language, a spirit is spoken of as if it were made of some attenuated material substance. The idea of a spirit being visible belongs to materialism. The idea of a disembodied spirit being visible to the bodily eyes —that is to say, objectively and otherwise than subjectively in vision—involves a contradiction in terms. There is no distinction between the mind, soul, and spirit of man. They are three different names for the same thing, and all their various functions and capacities may be summed up in the comprehensive term, "consciousness."

No distinction susceptible of recognition for theological purposes exists in the organism man other than the broad one between body and mind. Mind is the ordinary current name for the consciousness, and the mind is composed, as has already been observed, of ideas, including an underlying constant volume of categorical thought which does not pass away with the transitory ideas that agitate its surface, as waves pass over the surface of the sea. The human mind and the human consciousness are the same thing. The mind is not, as conventional language generally seems to imply, an active agent which thinks or is conscious, but is rather the passive thought or consciousness itself. The active agent which sets thought in motion is the volition or will. It is a

function of the mind, and not the mind itself. The word, "mind," as popularly used, conveys the idea of an *homunculus* inside the *homo*—of a smaller physical entity that is carried about inside the larger physical entity that walks about and eats and drinks. This idea is an error, and is a form of the common human error of mistaking appearances for reality. One reason why the term consciousness is so much used in modern metaphysics, instead of the simpler term mind, is that the former word lends itself less readily than the latter to this materializing process. We are so accustomed to materialize the word "mind," that it has practically ceased to convey the idea of negation of material conditions. This negation is better expressed by the word consciousness, but it must be remembered that in strict psychological science, mind and consciousness mean exactly the same thing. The mind, soul, spirit, and consciousness of man are different names for one objective reality. Also the mind is not so much an active agent which thinks as it is the passive thought itself. The mind, therefore, varies as the thought varies of which it is composed. The mind also developes and grows by the addition of new ideas or by the enlargement of old ones. The enlargement of old ideas takes place by the addition of new particles of idea, so to speak, similar in kind to the old idea regarded as a germ. They are added

to this germ, so that the acquisition of new ideas by the human mind, and the development of old ones already forming a part of the mind, are different forms of the same process of evolution. It is well to note here the close analogy between the metaphysical growth and development of the human mind and the physical growth and development of the body; in other words, between physical and metaphysical evolution. The parallel is more a case of identity than of analogy. As the growth and development of the physical organism called the body is due to fixed laws, so also is that of the metaphysical organism called the mind; and in both cases the natural laws determining growth and development are the ethical rules of conduct, by which the Almighty limits his own action as the executive of the natural law of evolution. This is also the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"* The context shows that this question implies that the additions made to the physical stature of individual men are due to the direct action of God acting as the executive of natural law. In the same way, the additions that are made to the intellectual stature of the human race, or of individual men, are due to the direct action of God acting as the executive of natural law. In both cases the reality differs from the appearance.

* St. Matthew, vi. 27.

In both cases the reality, which is the external action of God, is imperceptible. What appears to take place is automatic growth on the part of the physical organism; while, in the case of the metaphysical organism or human mind, men appear to find out for themselves, or to discover for themselves, the knowledge which is in fact revealed to them by God. The details of this knowledge, by which the intellectual stature of the mind is increased, correspond in metaphysical evolution to the particles which in physical evolution or growth are added to the body, by which the stature of the body is increased. The fact that the human consciousness is composed of an underlying constant volume of categorical thought, stirred by a surface agitation of ideas, determines the difference between the terms mind, soul, spirit, and the others that are used in promiscuous confusion, and with an exaggerated inaccuracy in popular language and conventional theology. Mind, soul, spirit, and the rest are not different semi-physical entities, but are merely different forms of consciousness. The consciousness is (*a*) mind, reason, or intellect, (*b*) conscience, or (*c*) soul or spirit, according to the capacity in which it is acting. The words soul or spirit, also, like the word mind, may properly be used to denote the consciousness as a whole; the sum, that is to say, of the mental faculties. The context will generally show when the words are

used in this sense. The idea that finds expression in popular language, that the soul, or spirit, is, as it were, a different organism from the mind, is a psychological error. The functions of the mind group themselves naturally in a triple form, and, speaking broadly, it may be said that all possible conceptions and ideas that can engage the attention of the human consciousness, fall naturally and necessarily into one or other of the three categories, intellectual, ethical or moral, and spiritual.

The three functions, or capacities, or forms of capacity, accordingly, that deal with these three different forms of thought, conception, or idea, are called on their subjective side respectively, the intellect or reason, the conscience, and the soul or spirit, and these three are one soul, or one spirit, or one mind, or one consciousness. The intellect of man corresponds to that function of the mind of God which in the Gospel of St. John is called the Logos. The three capacities or functions of the human mind, reason, conscience, and imagination, have been developed gradually in the order named in obedience to the law of evolution. The statement that these developments have taken place in obedience to the law of evolution, merely means that they have taken place in obedience to the will of God; of which will what we call "evolution" is merely the visible manifestation. The three different capacities or functions of

the human mind, acting in obedience to the natural law of their being, form three different conceptions or ideas of God. Thus the human reason, or intellect, or Logos conceives of God as the Father or first cause of natural phenomena ; the human conscience conceives of Him as the Judge of mankind; the human soul or imagination conceives of Him as a Spirit, who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

All possible conceptions or ideas which the human mind can form about God, must group themselves into one or other of these three categories; and these three forms under which God manifests Himself to the human mind are called in Scripture, respectively the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It is important to remember that the true doctrine of the Trinity is a self-evident fact. All true theological doctrine whatsoever relates to matter that is well within the range of the human faculties. The purpose of revelation is to draw attention to important truths lying well within the range of the human reason that are in their nature self-evident and axiomatic, and for that very reason likely to escape attention.

Beyond the abstract fact of their existence as objective realities, true theological revelation has nothing to do with transcendental matters lying outside of the range of the human faculties. All doctrine of that kind belongs to artificial revelation, or, as it is called in Scripture, revelation "made

with men's hands." The true theological doctrine of the Trinity is no more open to dispute than is the astronomical doctrine that the earth revolves round the sun. It is necessary, therefore, to be careful not to confound this doctrine with the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity. In the first chapter of Genesis we are, as it were, introduced to God in his capacity of the first person of the Trinity.

The chapter also contains an allegorical revelation of the metaphysical principles of idealism and evolution. The story of a six days creation contains the principle of evolution. Evolution in connection with creation is merely the idea of gradual, as opposed to the idea of instantaneous creation. The principle of idealism is expressed in the constant repetitions of the phrase, "God said." Take, for example, the sublime saying, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."* The thoughts of a man naturally take shape in words. The thoughts of God take shape in natural phenomena. Hence, natural phenomena are, as it were, the language of God. For God to think of light is to cause light to exist. This is the meaning of the passage, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light"; and of those other passages in the first chapter of Genesis in which we are told that "God said" let such and such things be, and they came into being. They are statements in a poetic form of well-established truths of metaphysical

* Genesis, i. 3.

science. They are especially poetical statements of the truth known to metaphysics as idealism. The idea of evolution is also expressed poetically in the narrative of a six days creation. The principle of evolution, which is the idea of gradual as opposed to that of sudden creation, is as present in a creation that occupied six days as in one that occupied millions of years. For practical purposes evolution in connection with creation may be defined as gradual creation on fixed principles. The fixed principles that govern evolution have been partially revealed by God to mankind in that extra-scriptural scientific knowledge that is commonly called "human discovery." It is, however, only apparently human discovery. It is, in fact, Divine revelation. Knowledge of these principles enables man, within certain limits, to predict the future, and these predictions are regarded by scientific theology as promises of God. Thus, we know that, for example, a growing child must pass through certain stages of growth and development. This knowledge enables us to predict these stages and to prepare for them. This we could not do if God were unfaithful to the law of evolution. We know, however, that He will be faithful to the covenant He has made with mankind respecting natural law. This is also the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, where we are told that God will carry out natural law without abatement of "jot" or "tittle." The principle of idealism is,

perhaps, less easy to grasp than that of evolution; but when the mind has once assimilated the idea, it is seen to be in its nature axiomatic and self-evident. It is necessary to distinguish carefully between the true idealism of Scripture and of genuine scientific theology and the bastard idealism, so to speak, of the scholastic theology. The latter is really materialism expressed in the vocabulary of idealism. There is a vast amount of true, pure, and genuine idealism to be found in the pages of some of the great writers of the early Roman Catholic Church. The Confessions of St. Augustine are full of this true, scientific idealism, expressed in the language of religion, and are therefore true scientific theology. Protestant ecclesiastical idealism, so far as it can be said to have any consistency at all, results in a kind of dualism. That is to say, it affirms the existence of two things essentially different in kind from each other. These two things are mind and matter. True idealism, however, denies dualism, and affirms monism. It affirms that mind and matter are not two things essentially different from each other, or differing in kind from each other, but, on the contrary, are two different forms of the same thing. Both are forms of consciousness. Matter and the combinations of matter termed "phenomena," on the one hand, and on the other the forces of nature governing those phenomena and regarded as modes of thought or consciousness of the spirit of God,

correspond respectively to what in the human mind are termed idea and will. Matter and material phenomena correspond to human idea, and the forces of nature correspond to human volition or will. Light, for example, and the phenomena of light, are idea in the mind of the Creator, and the natural forces that regulate and govern the phenomena of light are volition or will in the Divine mind. This is not poetry, but established scientific truth. The conclusions stated here can be built up by mathematical methods of reasoning from the axiom usually associated with the name of Bishop Berkeley. It dates, however, from long before Berkeley's time, being assumed to be true in the first chapter of Genesis and throughout the Scriptures, and especially in the Sermon on the Mount, where it is emphasized over and over again. Berkeley's axiom is to the effect that matter can have no noumenal or independent existence, apart from consciousness. It can only exist as phenomenon, while held as an object of cognition in a cognizing mind. Now, this axiom of Bishop Berkeley's is as absolutely true as the axioms of geometry. It is a category or axiom of metaphysics, as the theory that two right lines cannot enclose a space is a category or axiom of mathematics. It is an axiom respecting which it may be said that there are only two possible attitudes of the human mind towards it. Either a human mind is intellectually incapable of grasping the meaning of the axiom; or else it

receives it with a categorical assent as axiomatic, self-evident, and standing in no need of demonstration. Intellectual incapacity to grasp a particular metaphysical proposition must not be confounded with general intellectual incapacity, or intellectual capacity in the abstract. Many men of great talent, and even of great genius, are unable to assimilate even elementary metaphysical ideas. This, however, does not prevent the metaphysical ideas themselves from being objectively true. The study of physical science has a tendency to deaden the intellectual faculty by which metaphysical truth is apprehended. In physical science the dogma of materialism must be assumed to be true as a working hypothesis; and the human mind, by the law of its being, has a tendency to mistake the working hypotheses it is in the habit of using for objective reality and truth. The great unthinking majority of the human race are of course all materialists. An example of the power of the study of physical science to deaden the intellectual faculty by which metaphysical truth is assimilated is afforded by an article that appeared in the pages of a first-class monthly magazine some time about the year 1885 or 1886. It was written by Mr. St. George Mivart, a distinguished man of science and member of the Roman Catholic Church, and in it he described the doctrine of idealistic monism as "the negation of all that the human reason affirms." Evidently Mr. St. George Mivart

had not grasped the meaning of the axiom. It would be a correct description of the triple dogma of materialism to define it as the affirmation of all that the human reason denies, and the negation of all that the human reason affirms. The triple dogma of materialism consists of the three propositions—(1) that matter is noumenal or self-existent; (2) that the forces of nature are objective entities; and (3) that they are generated by a potency residing in matter itself, so that phenomena are the causes of the phenomena that succeed them.

This triple dogma of materialism is true as a working hypothesis; and in popular language it must be assumed to be true, as in popular language we assume that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west; but it is only apparently and not really true. It is also well in scientific theology, as in astronomy, to distinguish between believing a proposition to be true and realizing its truth. We believe, for instance, in the distances of astronomy; but we cannot realize or form any mental picture in our own minds of the meaning of countless millions of miles. So also we know that idealism must be true; but we cannot realize or form any mental picture of the terrible greatness of God which the idealistic hypothesis involves.

A few words of explanation respecting that hypothesis itself may find a place here. Idealism pushed to a true conclusion results necessarily in monism, and does not result in dualism. All

idealistic dualism can be shown to be materialism masquerading as idealism. It is materialism expressed in the language of idealism. The theology of the English Church is idealistic dualism. In other words, it is materialism served up in the vocabulary of idealism. Idealism is the name of the theory—or rather of the established truth—that this material universe is merely an idea floating, as it were, in the consciousness of an infinite God, or—in metaphysical language—owing its existence to the fact of its being held in cognition by the cognizing mind of an infinite God. A necessary deduction from this truth is the fact that what are known as the forces of nature are acts of volition—or rather fragments of a continuous act of volition—of this same infinite mind. For example, gravitation, which causes two bodies to approach each other, is not a power or "potency" residing in the bodies themselves, causing each to draw the other towards itself; but is the result of the metaphysical pressure upon the bodies of a power of volition external to themselves. To express the phenomenon in more homely language —the two bodies exist only because the eternal mind is thinking about them. The mental action of the mind of the Creator in thinking about the two bodies, and the fact of the existence of the two bodies, stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. Obviously, then, as the two bodies exist only because the Eternal Mind imagines them to exist, they must necessarily do whatever that

mind imagines them to be doing. When, therefore, the Divine First Cause imagines them to be moving together, they do move together. So when God imagined light to exist it existed. "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

The mental act, accordingly, of the Infinite Mind, which is continuous throughout eternity, pervades all space, and causes bodies to move towards each other and guides the stars in their courses, is called "gravitation."

So also the ethical idea in the Almighty Mind which regulates and determines the rules as to velocity, and so forth, under which God permits Himself to imagine the movements of bodies towards each other, is called the "law of gravitation." The same is true of all physical forces and laws of nature whatsoever. All physical forces of nature whatsoever are really metaphysical or mental forces, being, in fact, mental acts (or rather a continuous mental act) of the mind of the Almighty; and all laws of nature whatsoever are the concrete forms applicable to each particular case, of the abstract principle in the same infinite mind under which God permits Himself to exercise His volition among the phenomena of the universe. It will be seen that it is necessary to distinguish between matter and the phenomena of matter.* Both are forms of consciousness. The forces of

* Cardinal Newman, in the "Apologia," alludes to this distinction.

nature are modes of thought of the Spirit of God; and the laws of nature are the rules which He has laid down for the government of His own thoughts. The inflexibility of these rules constitutes what is called the uniformity of nature, and gives to the voice of God speaking in natural phenomena that absolute trustworthiness in which men of science repose such implicit confidence. It is also well to remember in this connection that scriptural theology is monotheism. There is but one God. This dogma includes among its meanings this special meaning, that the word "God" is the name of a single mind. The thoughts of God, therefore, are not—so to speak—separated, detached, isolated, capricious thoughts; but are different forms or parts of the same thought.

The different natural forces, energies, and laws, accordingly, of the physical universe are not different or separate forces, energies, and laws; but are different forms or parts of the same force, energy, and law. In other words, there are in all the universes of God but one force, one energy and one law. So also all the universes of God, and therefore—as the greater includes the less—this universe, and therefore again, on the same principle, this world, with all its infinitely various conditions and interests, forms a single organic unit of which the parts are mutually interdependent, and of which no single part can rightly be regarded as separated or isolated from the rest.

It is of great importance in the study of scientific

theology to obtain a firm intellectual grasp of the difference between abstract and concrete. In scriptural revelation, the substance of the revelation, which possesses Divine authority, is the abstract idea. The concrete form is that which carries the admixture of human error. For example, in Genesis the six days creation contains the abstract idea of evolution. The concrete form, however, would be wrong if we interpreted the six days literally. This we are prohibited from doing by the ethics of scriptural interpretation, for two reasons. First, because the Bible, being a parable of God, it does not bear a literal verbal interpretation; and, secondly, because the Bible is not a revelation of physical facts of any kind, scientific or historical, but is a revelation exclusively of ethical and spiritual truth. In the concrete form which the account of the Creation assumes in Genesis, we find that not only have periods of twenty-four hours each been substituted for geological periods; but also the order of succession of the geological strata themselves is not given correctly. According to the ethics of scientific theology, which are also the ethics of scriptural Christianity, the discrepancy between the story of the Creation as given in Genesis, and the same story as told by modern science is to be accepted as a revelation from God of the fact that the scriptural message has nothing to do with physical revelation. The scriptural message consists exclusively of meta-

physical, including ethical and spiritual, revelation. Physical revelation is given elsewhere than in Scripture, and we are bound to postulate design, purpose, and intention in the mind of God to convey to mankind a message to that effect through modern science. Modern science should, in fact, be regarded as an angel of God. This, in sober fact, modern science is; for the phrase "angel of God" means a Divine messenger, and modern science is, in fact, a messenger sent from God to teach mankind the folly and wickedness of scholastic superstition in things temporal as well as in things eternal. It has already been pointed out that the fundamental dogma of scriptural theology is a triple dogma embracing the three ideas of idealism, evolution, and personified natural causation. The idea of natural causation personified is clearly pointed out in the very first verse of the Bible. In that verse we are told that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." But we know through modern science, which is also a messenger from God, that the physical heavens and the earth are the result of natural causation. Either therefore there is no God, or God, in His capacity of the Father, must be thought of as natural causation personified. But the phenomena that come within the range of human experience are not confined to physical matters dealt with by physical science. The phenomena that come within the range of human experience group themselves naturally into

three categories, and God is the first cause of them all. They are all of them due to natural causation and therefore God must be the first cause of them all.

There are, first, the phenomena of the physical universe, that are investigated by the natural sciences. They are the result of natural causation, and the natural causation that produces them is a person. This can be proved to be true by mathematical methods of reasoning based upon the axiom of Bishop Berkeley. It is part of the doctrine of idealism, and is a fact of metaphysical science as well as a fact of theology. It is well to remember that these statements, as well as those about to be put forward, are not speculations respecting the unknown, but ascertained and established truth. The natural causation that produces the phenomena of the physical universe is a person, and that person is spoken of in Scripture as "the Father," and is, in fact, the capacity or function of the Godhead that has been brought into the Anglican Creed as the first person of the Trinity.

There are, secondly, the phenomena that are due to the presence of the human family on earth, that give a meaning to the words history, politics, science, literature, society, and other similar terms. All these are due to natural causation, and the natural causation that produces them is a person, and is spoken of in Scripture as "the Son," and His personal character is revealed in the New Testament under the name of Jesus Christ. This

capacity or function of the Godhead has been brought into the Creed of the Church under the name of the second person of the Trinity. It will be seen from this explanation that God is the first cause of human actions, as well as of the phenomena of the physical universe. This is a point of great importance in connection with the artificial ethics of the conventional theology; but as it is a large subject in itself we will not dwell upon it here.

Lastly, there are the invisible, psychical phenomena of the human mind due to the artistic and religious consciousness in mankind, which find visible manifestation in the phenomena of art and religion.

These are also due to natural causation, and the natural causation that produces them is a person. This capacity or function of the Godhead is spoken of in Scripture as "the Spirit," and the "Holy Ghost," and has been brought into the Creed of the Church under the name of the third person of the Trinity.

It will be observed that these three capacities, or functions, or manifestations of the Godhead appeal respectively to the three separate, or apparently separate, functions or capacities of the human mind, called respectively the intellect or reason, the conscience, and the soul or spirit or imagination. This is the true objective signification of those scriptural truths that have been corrupted by the

scholastic idolatry into a transcendental paradox entitled the "doctrine of the Trinity." The true doctrine of the Trinity contains nothing transcendental. It is a statement of simple natural psychological theology. Its truth is axiomatic and self-evident to any competent thinker who carefully considers the subject. The transcendental doctrine of the Trinity is not Scripture, but scholastic misinterpretation of Scripture. It is what is called in the Second Commandment a "graven image" of things in heaven. It is artificial doctrine, or doctrine "made with men's hands."

This is a good opportunity to point out a fact of importance with regard to current controversy. Much of this controversy takes the form of dispute between dogma and no dogma. This is a mistake. The dogmas of Christianity are as inflexible as the propositions of geometry. They must be so, as they are simply allegorical statements of natural psychological truth. The evil is not dogma, but the substitution by the scholastic idolatry of transcendental for natural exegesis of dogma. The scriptural doctrine of the three persons of the Godhead relates to the psychological fact of the natural limitations of the human mind. Owing to these limitations the mind of man must think of God as a human being if it thinks of Him at all; and can only think of Him in one of His three capacities at the same time. Our minds are similarly limited when we think about our

fellow-creatures. When, for example, we think of a man in his public capacity as a soldier or a statesman, he becomes for the moment practically a different person from what he is when we think of him in his domestic capacity as son, father, or brother. The true doctrine of the Trinity has no more transcendental meaning than this. It simply relates to the natural limitations of the human mind, which compel mankind, as it were, to divide its conception of an infinite God into three persons. The three persons of the Trinity are the three forms under which God manifests Himself to the three functions of the human mind called respectively the intellect, the conscience, and the soul ; and the fact that these three functions of the human mind exist and correspond to the three persons of the Trinity in God, is what is meant by the statement in Genesis that man is made in the image of God. From these explanations it will be seen that the first chapters of Genesis contain in germ the abstract idea the development of which in the religious consciousness of mankind, in obedience to the law of evolution, was to result hereafter in a complete and perfect science of Christian theology. That abstract idea is a compound idea, and we may here recapitulate its component parts. They are evolution, idealism, natural causation personified, three functions of the Godhead, and three corresponding functions of the human mind. The

abstract idea that consists of these five component parts constitutes the germ or (to use the actual metaphor employed by Christ in the parable of the grain of mustard seed) the "seed" of the Christian revelation.

As the true doctrine of the Trinity is simply a fact of natural theological psychology, so the whole Christian creed, as it is found in Scripture, belongs to the catholic law of the universe, and is as much a part of that law as the law of gravitation. The great point to bear in mind is, that the Scriptures are a parable, and contain an allegorical or dramatic, and not an historical, revelation. Historical, or Roman Catholic Christianity, is the stepping-stone to allegorical Christianity; but the element of finality resides, not in historical, but in allegorical Christianity. Reverting to the subject of the three functions of the human mind that constitute the trinity of that mind, it is important to remember that these three functions are not three separate concrete entities; but are simply different capacities of action possessed by the human mind. The student of scientific metaphysics must be on his guard here. Popular language on this subject is very misleading. It must be borne in mind that a man's self, his personality, his Ego as it is called in metaphysics, is not his body, but his mind. Strictly speaking, it is an idea in his mind, the idea of his own identity. The Church, on the other hand, teaches

indirectly that his self is not his mind but his body. This is implied in all the sacramental ceremonies of the scholastic idolatry where a manipulation of physical elements takes place. The doctrines symbolized in such ceremonies all belong to the materialistic element of the idealistic dualism of ecclesiastical teaching. They have no place in true Christian theology. It is impossible to see clearly the solution of the many problems that are raised by the current controversy, unless you can distinguish between the direct and the indirect teaching of the Church.

As a rule the poison of idolatry is hidden in its indirect teaching by implication, but the direct teaching also of the Church, even in matters of simple psychology, is often dangerously erroneous. For instance, it is by no means unusual to hear allusions in the sermons of the English clergy to man's tripartite nature, coupled with the explanation that the component parts of this tripartite nature are body, mind, and soul. This is much the same error that has been already referred to as occurring in a lecture by a distinguished medical man, that was published in the newspapers. Man has a dual nature: an animal nature and a divine nature. This combination of divine and animal constitutes human nature. The animal part of this dual nature does not come much into theology. It rather belongs to the science of the physician than to that of the metaphysician.

Theology deals mainly with the divine element in man, and it is to this element that the tripartite nature belongs. Of this tripartite nature, the component parts are intellect, conscience and imagination; and the body does not come into it at all. A man's body is in no sense whatever, from a theological point of view, a part of himself. It is no more a part of man's ego or self than his clothes are a part of his ego or self. There is, of course, a sense in which a man's clothes may be said to be a part of his personality, and his body is a part of his personality in the same sense, though perhaps a little more so in degree. A man's body, like his clothes, and his clothes like his body, express, or bring home as it were, his personality to the bodily senses of other people; and in this sense, but in no other, are both parts of a man's self, or personality, or ego.

It is a reasonable belief—confirmed by the teaching of St. Paul—that in a future state the soul will require a body for the same purpose, to express its personality to the other spiritual existences that shall be its co-heirs in eternity. A material view of this scriptural teaching has been corrupted by the scholastic idolatry into the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. The true doctrine of the resurrection of the body is the teaching of St. Paul, interpreted by the self-evident axioms of metaphysical science. The scholastic doctrine of the resurrection of the body

is materialism, and has nothing in common with the teaching of St. Paul except the vocabulary which it misapplies. It is a reasonable belief that in a future state the soul will require a body to make its existence known to those who shall be its co-heirs of eternal life. This body is called a "spiritual body" by the Apostle St. Paul in order to distinguish it from the "terrestrial body" worn for the same purpose in this world.

This teaching of St. Paul is conveyed in poetical language, but in language which is nevertheless as clear and lucid as that of the books of Euclid. It has, however, been corrupted by the Church into the doctrine that the body with which the soul will be clothed in Heaven is the same body that has been buried in a tomb in this world. This latter doctrine is not Scripture, but is academical misinterpretation of Scripture. Here, as always, we must distinguish between theological and ecclesiastical dogma. The ecclesiastical dogmas of the Church of England rest on no authority except the law of the land, an authority which, in matters of faith and morals, is not recognized by scientific theology. A man's body is not his *ego* or self, and the "celestial" or "spiritual" body, with which it is reasonable to believe that the soul will be clothed in Heaven, is not the same as the "terrestrial" body with which it is clothed in this world. On this point the teaching of the Church of England is erroneous.

It is spurious metaphysics. Equally spurious metaphysics is the theory of a distinction between the mind and the soul. No such distinction exists. The mind and the soul are not two separate and distinct entities. The ecclesiastical doctrine that the soul is something distinct from the mind may be compared to the view that the body with which a man goes to church on Sunday is a different body from that which he goes out hunting on a week-day. The soul is merely the scriptural name for what is called in the language of modern metaphysics the "religious consciousness." In homely language, it is the imagination, and custom limits the use of the term to the religious imagination; that is to say, to the imagination when engaged in spiritual meditation. But obviously the consciousness with which a man meditates on spiritual things on a Sunday, is the same consciousness with which he studies mathematics or plays whist on a week-day. There is no end to the difficulties that are introduced gratuitously into the intellectual domain of theology by the academical practice of splitting up the human consciousness into separate entities. This is bad enough, but the superlative of the grotesque is reached when these imaginary entities are ranged in antagonism to each other. Among the conflicts that take place between them that between faith and reason is the one of which we hear most. Occasions will arise

in this volume to refer to this remarkable combat, so we will pass the subject by for the present.

We have now touched in this chapter on many, if not on most, of the abstract ideas of scientific theology that will be more fully dealt with hereafter. Our object has been, and will continue to be, to explain that the great "conflict"—of which we read so much in current literature—"between religion and science" is, in fact, a conflict between scholastic materialism masquerading as "theology" on the one hand, and, on the other, a true scientific theology, based on the application to scriptural exegesis of correct standards, ethics, and criteria of truth.

It is a conflict between the allegorical and the historical interpretation of Scripture, and if it is coming to pass that it is apparently a conflict between religion on the one hand, and no religion on the other, the lamentable result is due to that scholastic stubbornness which is now, as it was in Old Testament days, the most striking characteristic of idolatry. Most English Churchmen would admit, as an abstract proposition, that if a theology is not true, it is not desirable in the interests of morality that its propaganda should be successful; but none of them appear to be able to carry the reasoning a link further. If the natural laws that govern the development of the human mind are such as to make it impossible that an academical

creed involving doubtful historical matter should serve permanently as a bond of union among educated mankind, it is legitimate inductive reasoning to accept that fact as evidence of the presence of error in the exegesis of the creed itself. The theology of the Church of England is unadulterated materialism, served up in the vocabulary of idealism. By interpreting the ethical and spiritual truths of the scriptural parable as historical facts, she has practically turned the Christian message into a graven image, far more dangerous to moral and spiritual life than would be the honest uncompromising worship of material graven images of wood or stone.

By her erroneous exegesis of miracle she has attached the idea of the divinity of Christ, not, as the Scriptures do, to the "mind which was in Christ Jesus," but to the body of Jesus of Nazareth. If such teaching as this could prosper, it would follow that the Christian revelation had been given in vain. Stubbornness is compared in the Old Testament to the sin of witchcraft, and that is as reasonable an analogy as the modern one which identifies it with "faith." Materialism, however strongly it may be established and endowed, and otherwise supported by the State, cannot possibly be theology, and scholastic superstition is not Christianity. "God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."—St. John, iv. 24.

CHAPTER III.

Faith, Reason, and Revelation.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Hebrews, xi. 1.

In dealing with the subject of the immorality of idolatry, it will be convenient to select illustrations and examples showing what idolatry is, and how and why it is immoral, as far as possible from current periodical literature. We live so fast in these times, and the opinions of one day are so often repudiated on the next, that it may perhaps be well to define the phrase current periodical literature.

On the whole, then, we select our illustrations as far as possible from the periodical literature that has appeared since the year 1880. There may perhaps be an occasional exception to this rule, but, on the whole, in the case of illustrations drawn from newspapers and magazines, our illustrations and examples shall be drawn from the periodical literature that has appeared since the year 1880.

During the period indicated the tone of periodical literature towards theological and political metaphysics has changed little, if indeed it has changed at all. The insidiousness of the modern cant that is born of intellectual disingenuousness in metaphysical thought constitutes a formidable national danger; and it is in the literature of every-day life, in current periodicals, newspapers, magazines and reviews, that the pharisaism resulting from an artificial system of ethics does most practical mischief. Here also it is so skilfully disguised that the conventional standard of right and wrong might occasionally be mistaken, even by a trained metaphysician, for parts of the real and genuine moral law.

A very dangerous fallacy, against which the student of scientific theology cannot guard himself too carefully, is the popular notion that metaphysical truth is somehow different in kind from other truth. This erroneous view is constantly expressed in current literature and, oddly enough, the writers who give expression to it generally assume in the act of doing so a tone of superiority, as if their action were a virtue and not a vice, and also as if metaphysical truth were not only different in kind from other forms of truth, but were also, so to speak, superior in rank to other forms of truth. According to their fanciful philosophy, metaphysical truth is different in kind from, and takes precedence of, physical truth. It is less correct to call this teaching erroneous than to

describe it as meaningless. An example of it occurred in a criticism that appeared in the *Globe* newspaper one day in December, 1885, on some matter in dispute between "religion and science." In the particular discussion, whatever it may have been about, science had had the last word, and had wound up the controversy with a remark about the supreme claims of truth. The *Globe*, commenting on the whole dispute, and especially on the final remark, summed it all up in the oracular observation that truth is not limited to physics, but that there is metaphysical as well as physical truth. For the purpose of our illustration, it does not signify what the actual dispute was about, or whether on this particular occasion science was or was not in the right. We are only concerned with the oracular observation of the *Globe* newspaper. It is quite true that there is metaphysical as well as physical truth; but they are not two different kinds of truth. Truth is one and indivisible and is the same in every field of human thought. Truth in physics and in metaphysics is simply truth in two different subjects. We don't admit a difference of kind in truth in two different branches of physical science. Geology and astronomy are different subjects, but truth is the same in both. The methods of reasoning and the standards, ethics and criteria of truth in the two sciences are identical. It is exactly the same with physics and metaphysics. Physics and meta-

physics are two different subjects, but truth is the same in both. The methods of reasoning and standards, ethics, and criteria of truth applicable to both subjects are identical. It is quite true that there is metaphysical as well as physical truth, but this proposition carries with it another which is equally true.

Metaphysical truth exists, but so also does metaphysical untruth. The scriptural name for metaphysical untruth is idolatry, and the prohibition of idolatry in the ethics of Christianity carries within itself a commandment of God addresed to all men who name the name of Christ to distinguish between metaphysical truth and metaphysical untruth, and to resist all insidious attempts on the part of the latter to usurp the throne of the former. To describe the fallacies of ecclesiastical or political sectarianism as "metaphysical truth" is juggling with words. They are not metaphysical truth at all, but metaphysical untruth and are therefore idolatry. There is a curious vagueness in the popular mind on the subject of metaphysics.

It would no doubt be convenient to the votaries of artificial ecclesiastical and political "creeds" if their arbitrary and erroneous assumptions could be screened permanently behind high-sounding names, and enabled to work their inevitable mischief and ruin unchecked by being disguised as "metaphysical truth." That this can be done now is

unfortunately true; but it is only a temporary evil. Metaphysical truth, including public and private ethics and theology, is as much natural truth as the truth of physical science, and can be attained by the same methods of reasoning. The standards of truth applied by physical science to the laws that govern the phenomena of the universe are just as applicable to the laws that govern the movements and growth and development of the human mind. Application of these standards and tests to the theories of Protestant academical "theology" results in the conclusion that those theories are as erroneous from the point of view of metaphysical as they notoriously are from that of physical science. It is of the greatest importance to avoid attaching esoteric meanings to the terms of the vocabulary of metaphysics. Above all, this must not be done in the case of the word metaphysics itself. What is metaphysics? Much of the labour of metaphysicians has been devoted in the past to speculations respecting essence, substance, form, being, pure reason, and similar unpractical metaphysical ideas, and it has consequently come to pass that an erroneous idea has sprung up in the popular mind that these purely academical questions exhaust the science of metaphysics. These things do in fact occupy a very small corner of the field of metaphysics, and they do not come into modern metaphysics at all. They are to modern metaphysics what the Ptolemaic is to the

Copernican astronomy. All science that is not physics is metaphysics. Psychology is a branch of metaphysics. So is the science of ethics. So is the science of theology, which includes both psychology and ethics. So is the science of pure mathematics, and it is well to bear this latter fact in mind when you hear men like Mr. Matthew Arnold or Mr. Frederic Harrison boasting that their philosophy excludes metaphysics.

The distinction between physics and metaphysics is a very simple one. All knowledge that can be verified by the five bodily senses belongs to physics. All knowledge that cannot be so verified—in which the intellect, the conscience, or the imagination have to work, so to speak, without the aid of the five bodily senses—belongs to metaphysics. Therefore, pure mathematics, psychology, ethics, and theology are all metaphysics. The ethics of Christianity, like the natural sciences, have a mathematical foundation. In other words, the natural and moral laws of God have the same foundation. This fact is recognized in the Sermon on the Mount. The ethics of Christianity are based on the natural laws of the universe, and have the same mathematical foundation as the natural laws of the universe; and this fact explains the difference between scriptural ethics and the conventional ethics of social, ecclesiastical, or political sectarianism.

The theories that are taught as "theology" by

the Protestant Church of England are not correct metaphysics. Their defenders, therefore, gain nothing by oracular utterances about the existence of metaphysical as well as physical truth. It is quite true that metaphysical truth exists, but so does metaphysical untruth ; and it is as easy to separate truth from error in theology as it is in physical science. In the last chapter we referred to the practice so common among the representatives of ecclesiastical schools of thought of splitting up the human mind into numerous imaginary entities called by the names of the functions of the mind, and then ranging these non-existing entities in a fictitious antagonism to each other. The battle between " faith and reason," so often mentioned in current ecclesiastical literature, was cited as an example of this. The phrase a " conflict between faith and reason " expresses as meaningless a contradiction in terms as the phrase a " conflict between religion and science." Those who use the phrase " a conflict between faith and reason " attach, without knowing that they do so, an esoteric meaning to the word " faith." To attach an esoteric meaning to a scriptural term means to substitute a strained artificial or conventional signification for the ordinary natural meaning of the term. The " private " interpretations of Scripture that are prohibited by the Apostle St. Peter are identical with what are called in modern metaphysics " esoteric " interpretations. The

Church of England, when she talks about a conflict between faith and reason, attaches an esoteric meaning to the word faith. The ordinary natural meaning of the word faith is trust or confidence, and the word has no other meaning whatever. Reason tells us where trust and confidence is reasonable, and may safely be reposed; and where trust and confidence is not reasonable, and had better not be reposed. Reason and faith are two different functions of the human mind that cannot possibly come into collision with each other. Faith or confidence may be, as it were, moved from one person or from one institution to another, and reason determines what these movements are to be.

There is no more sense in talking about an "antagonism" between faith and reason than there would be in talking about an "antagonism" between the eyesight with which a man looks out of his right eye and that with which he looks out of his left. Faith and reason are not two separate entities that can be ranged in antagonism to each other. They are simply two different functions of the human mind. It might happen that two of the bodily senses should tell us a different story about some external physical object; but in that case we would not talk of an "antagonism" between the sense of hearing and that of seeing. We would recognize the fact that there was something in the external object itself that required closer examination.

It is exactly the same in metaphysics. Reason is the faculty of the human mind by which that mind can put itself into communication with God; and through that faculty God speaks to the human mind directly. Faith, therefore, which means trust and confidence in God, necessarily means also that all reasonable belief is Divine revelation, and that all unreasonable belief is human superstition.

Faith, being a function of the human mind, is, like that mind, subject to natural laws. Children repose trust and confidence in their parents, and have a natural tendency to repose trust and confidence in everybody. When, however, they go out into the world the experience they meet with changes that tendency into a tendency to repose trust and confidence in nobody.

This takes place in obedience to natural laws, and reason endorses the action of the natural law as wise, prudent and loving towards the human being himself. If the adult were to resist the action of these natural laws, and in defiance of the lessons of experience were to continue to repose a blind trust and confidence in everybody, and if his conduct in doing so were described as a conflict in his mind between faith and reason, that use of the phrase would be identical with the way in which it is used in current controversial literature. It would be a misuse of the phrase, and the way in which the phrase is used in current controversial literature is also a misuse of the phrase. In

the case of the child, what really occurs is a conflict in its mind between reason and unreason as regards the disposal of faith, and this is also a true description of the conflict so often referred to in current ecclesiastical literature. It is a conflict between reason and unreason as to the disposal of faith. For several generations modern science and the Church have been in an attitude of conflict towards each other as regards the true exegesis of Scripture. On every disputed point science has been proved to be right, and the Church has been proved to be wrong. Reason then says, "Let us put faith in the standards, ethics, and criteria of truth that have always been right and have never been wrong." Unreason says, "Let us continue to put faith in the artificial standards, ethics, and criteria of scholastic doctrine that have always been wrong and have never been right." This is a correct analysis of the conflict which in current literature is misnamed a conflict between faith and reason, and is sometimes misnamed a conflict between religion and science. Both terms are misnomers. The conflict is one between reason and unreason as regards the interpretation of Scripture, and between reason and unreason as regards the disposal of faith. Unreason in theology is called in Scripture "idolatry" and "superstition," and is prohibited in the Decalogue as immoral. The scholastic exegesis of Scripture is one which from its nature could not possibly result in true conclusions, and,

as a matter of fact, whenever it has come into collision with natural science it has invariably been wrong. Faith and reason are two different functions of the human mind, and it is the province of reason to say where faith may and where it may not be reposed. Faith in God, including a reasonable belief in the fact that God is gradually educating the human race, through nature interpreted by the Bible, and through the Bible interpreted by nature, is the only legitimate form of Christian faith. All other forms of nominal Christian faith are what is called in Scripture "antichrist." In some meanings of the word faith, however, it is identical with reason. It is proper to describe reasonable belief in all truths that cannot be verified by the bodily senses, that is to say in all metaphysical truth, as "faith." The truths of pure mathematics cannot be verified by the bodily senses, and we call the mental faculty by which we believe them reason; but it would not be incorrect to call it faith. It is, in fact, trust and confidence. We feel trust and confidence that the principles which belong to the abstract or ideal triangle will be found in all concrete forms of the triangle. This is really faith in analogy, and faith in analogy is faith in the word of God, for analogy is the word of God. The parables of Christ are appeals to analogy, and therefore faith in Christ means faith in analogy, which is the word of God. There can be no such thing as Christian faith divorced from reason,

Faith divorced from reason is credulity, and is not a thing to be praised, but is a thing to be condemned. Faith and reason accordingly may be described as different functions of the mind, and occasionally as the same function. Our reason tells us that certain mathematical propositions that cannot be verified by the bodily senses are true. It also tells us that certain theological propositions that cannot be verified by the bodily senses are true. It is conventional to call reason in the former case "reason," and in the latter "faith." In St. Paul's well-known definition he practically identifies faith with reason. According to his definition faith is merely reason applied to the invisible that cannot be verified by the bodily senses. "Faith," he tells us, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Now, if we apply that definition to the invisible in this world, we shall see that it is an accurate definition of reason. Suppose we are standing by the seashore watching a ship putting out to sea. Before she disappears below the horizon she is visible to the eyes of sense. We have, therefore, the evidence of our bodily senses that she exists. There is as yet no demand either for faith or reason to prove her existence. Here our bodily senses are the evidence of things that are seen. Presently the ship disappears below the horizon, but we still know that she exists, though we no longer see her. We know that she exists, but our bodily senses are no longer

evidence of the fact. The ship is now a "thing not seen," and our reason is the "evidence" of it. It will accordingly be noticed that in things temporal reason is the "evidence of things not seen." According, therefore, to the teaching of the Apostle St. Paul, faith and reason are identical. The only difference is that it is conventional to apply the term faith to the evidence of things not seen in the spiritual world, and the term reason to the evidence of things not seen in the natural world; but they are, in fact, the same thing. If for the idea of a ship putting out to sea we substitute the idea of a ship expected home, it can be shown by a similar process of reasoning that faith and reason are equally identical when the former is defined as the "substance of things hoped for." This reasoning by analogy from things temporal to things eternal, and from things eternal to things temporal, is a development of the underlying principle of the teaching of Christ, and is, in fact, scientific theology. It will be seen from the above explanation that to speak of a conflict between faith and reason is to prostitute language to esoteric meanings. It cannot, in fact, be done without depriving the word "faith" of its simple natural meaning, and to do this is immoral and is that particular form of immorality called in Scripture idolatry. Whenever a passage in Scripture admits of two interpretations, one simple and natural, the other paradoxical or

grotesque, the moral law commands us to select the former and to reject the latter.

To do otherwise is to use the religious consciousness in mankind in support of false propositions. The Third Commandment is a prohibition of this particular form of immorality. It is unfortunately the "note" of academical theology to reject simple and natural explanations of scriptural passages and to substitute for them unnatural and paradoxical meanings. For example, in connection with St. Paul's definition of faith there are two kinds of things that are "not seen." There are things that are "not seen" because they are below the horizon, and there are things that are "not seen" because they do not exist at all. St. Paul uses the phrase "things not seen" to denote the former class. The Church frequently uses the word "faith" in connection with the latter class. To those who believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation their faith is the evidence of things not seen; but the word faith is not used here in the scriptural sense. From the foregoing explanations, it will be perceived, with reference to the opening observations of this chapter, that all statements in metaphysics are not necessarily true. As the *Globe* newspaper says, it is true that there is metaphysical truth as well as physical truth ; but it is equally true—as the *Globe* newspaper omits to say—that there is metaphysical untruth also. The proposition that two and two are five is a proposition in mathe-

matics, but it is not true. Similarly propositions are not necessarily true because they belong to the domain of metaphysics. The doctrine of transubstantiation belongs to the domain of metaphysics, as the proposition that two and two are five belongs to that of pure mathematics; but the latter proposition is false mathematics, and the former doctrine is erroneous metaphysics. Almost all the intellectual difficulties that have been imported into the domain of theology can be traced to the habit of academical theologians of fastening esoteric meanings on the scriptural vocabulary, and their action in doing so invariably results in a "conflict" of some kind. We have seen an example of this in the case of the word "faith." Another is furnished by the word "revelation." As the Church, by putting a private interpretation on the word "faith," has brought faith into collision with reason, so she has done exactly the same with the term revelation. The Church has attached an esoteric meaning to the word "revelation," and as a result of her doing so we are perpetually reading in current periodical literature of a conflict between science and revelation. The simple natural meaning of the word revelation is that which is revealed. To reveal, in its turn, means to cause a true idea to pass into the consciousness of the person to whom the revelation is made without the use of articulate language. A great difference between scientific and scholastic theology consists in this,

that the latter determines the meaning of words by the method of the grammarians, a method which results in the consecration of pedantry as if it were a sacred principle of religion. Real theology, on the other hand, determines the meaning of words by examination and comparison of and among the different ideas the word is used to express. By this means it is found that the exclusion of articulate language, as an instrument for conveying the true idea that forms the substance of the revelation, is part of the idea of revelation. When articulate language is used as the instrument of revelation, then the message that constitutes the revelation should be, so to speak, hidden in the articulate language, and should not coincide with the verbal message which the articulate language appears to convey. In such a case—which is the actual case with scriptural revelation—the hidden message would be the real revelation, while the articulate language, or verbal message, would be merely the form of the revelation. It is obvious that the latter might easily be mistaken for the real revelation. This mistake has, in fact, been made by the Church, and it is this mistake that brings the artificial theology of ecclesiastical systems into collision with modern science. An illustration of the difference between a verbal message delivered in articulate language, and a revelation hidden in the verbal message but not coinciding with it, might easily be selected from the trivial events of

every-day life. Suppose we were expecting a friend to return from India, but did not know the exact date when he was to arrive. If we met somebody who had seen him, and that person, knowing our anxiety about our friend, had told us that he had met him, that statement, made in articulate language, would not be in the nature of a revelation. If, however, the person who met us was a comparative stranger, knowing nothing of our anxiety about our Indian friend, and he were to tell us a story of something that had happened to himself that morning, and that our Indian friend's name came into the narrative incidentally, showing that he was in the stranger's company when the event happened, that would be in the nature of a revelation of the fact of our friend's return from India. The stranger's interest would be centred in the incident that had happened to himself. We probably should think nothing of that, but only of the incidentally mentioned fact of our Indian friend's presence in England. Here the substance of the revelation would be our Indian friend's presence in England. The form of the revelation would be the stranger's narrative of what had happened to himself, in which we probably should take little or no interest. This is a homely but accurate illustration of the difference between verbal statement and revelation. Obviously, in this case, revelation might also be given without any verbal statement at all, as, for example, if

when walking in London we actually saw our Indian friend in the flesh on the other side of the street. Scriptural revelation is historical in form only, and its revelation relates exclusively to ethical and spiritual truth. It contains a revelation of the moral law of God, of the nature of the spiritual character of God, and of the fact that the law of evolution, or the survival of the fittest, affects the element of consciousness in mankind and acts beyond the grave. Statements of physical fact, whether relating to natural phenomena or to history, are no part of scriptural revelation. Obviously this must be so, as the Scriptures are a parable. The revelation of a parable is the ethical and spiritual truth which the parable illustrates. It is plain that this is unaffected by the circumstance of whether the form of the parable be or be not historical. The ethical lesson, for example, that is conveyed in the parable of the Good Samaritan is unaffected by the circumstance of whether a man did or did not in actual fact go down to Jericho and fall among thieves. This is true of the whole of the Scriptures, which, from Genesis to Revelation, are a parable. As the story of the Good Samaritan is a parable of Christ, so the scriptural drama as a whole is a parable of God.

It follows that no statement, or apparent statement, of physical fact, whether it relates to natural phenomena or to history, need be believed because it is mentioned in Scripture, for scriptural revela-

tion is not concerned with such matters. We must, however, guard against the opposite extreme.

Because there is a mythical element in Scripture, it does not follow that all its apparent history is mythical. What follows is that the ethical or spiritual lesson contained in an historical passage, which constitutes the Divine revelation belonging to that passage, is unaffected as regards its Divine authority by the circumstance of whether the historical passage does or does not contain an accurate statement of physical fact. The most important historical incident mentioned in Scripture is the Crucifixion. There is no reason to doubt that the Crucifixion is an accurate statement of historical fact as regards its main incident; but, even if it were not so, the Divine authority of the Christian revelation under its true interpretation would not be shaken in the least. As the Scriptures contain a spiritual revelation, and do not contain a physical revelation, the story of the resurrection of Christ must not be interpreted as a physical resurrection of the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The true interpretation of the dogma of the resurrection is a double interpretation. Under one of its exegeses it is a parable, occupying its proper place in the scriptural dramatic parable. Under the other exegesis it is a revelation of metaphysical or spiritual, but at the same time historical, fact.

It is a revelation of an historical fact which

there is no reason to doubt is actually an historical fact. It is important here to remember what was explained a page or two ago about the difference between the form and substance of revelation. The Scriptures are not a revelation of physical facts, but exclusively of metaphysical facts. Now, an historical fact may be in very deed an historical fact, and yet not physical, but metaphysical. The Crucifixion is an example of an historical fact which is physical in its nature. The resurrection is an example of an historical fact which is metaphysical in its nature. It is important to note here that while the substance of the latter revelation is metaphysical or spiritual, the form is physical. Our knowledge, however, of the fact that the Bible is not a physical but a metaphysical revelation has come from God, and it is, therefore, immoral to interpret the physical form of the narrative verbally. It is a form of the immorality called in Scripture "idolatry."

That Christ appeared alive to His disciples after His death, and afterwards to St. Paul, appears to be as historically certain as anything in the past can be historically certain; but the appearance was a vision. In metaphysical language it was subjective, and not objective.

A curious popular delusion prevails, due to erroneous ecclesiastical teaching, that, under the circumstances related in the Gospels, a subjective visionary appearance would have been less real, as

being less confirmatory of the divine authority of the Gospels, than an objective physical appearance. This is a mistake. A subjective vision is as confirmatory of the fact of the spiritual resurrection of Christ as an objective physical appearance would have been. On the other hand, an objective physical appearance would have involved a breach of natural law which would, in its turn, have been a breach of the covenant established between God and man in the beginning, of which covenant the rainbow in the clouds is the celestial signal.

We are treating in this chapter of revelation in the abstract, rather than of special concrete parts of revelation; but as we have touched on the story of the resurrection as an example of revelation it may be convenient to devote one or two more short observations to the subject. The dogma of scientific theology, that the resurrection was a subjective spiritual vision, and not an objective physical reappearance, is based on *à priori* reasoning; but this is one of those cases where *à priori* reasoning becomes morally compulsory. For God to break, suspend, reverse, or violate a natural law would be to swerve from that moral inflexibility which in the Sermon on the Mount is made the foundation of the Christian ethics. But in the case of the resurrection the *à priori* reasoning is confirmed by masses of independent evidence. Curiously enough the Church in her academical theology uses some of this evidence to prove exactly the reverse of

what it actually does prove. The narrative of the scepticism of St. Thomas is an example of this. Visionary apparitions of the dead are not uncommon in our own day, and when they occur the departed spirit invariably appears in the same form, and sometimes in the same garments, in which he was visible to our bodily eyes in this world. This at once stamps the appearance as subjective. God, in a vision, allows the fact of the continued existence of the departed to be brought home to our consciousness; but natural laws compel our own imaginations to determine the form in which the vision shall appear. In the same way the fact that Christ appeared to His disciples after the Crucifixion bearing the bodily marks of His cruel death, should be interpreted, and is interpreted by scientific theology as divine revelation of the fact that the resurrection was a subjective metaphysical spiritual vision, and was not an objective physical fact. The imaginations of the disciples, acting in obedience to natural laws, determined the form of the vision. Under both exegeses, however, the physical and the metaphysical, the resurrection must be affirmed to have been an historical fact. This is a point of importance, as it is a "note" of Protestant scholastic teaching to encourage the vagueness that gives it the unpleasant flavour of disingenuousness that sends so many conscientious persons over to the Roman

Catholic Church. It is a part of this note of vagueness to encourage a certain mental confusion about metaphysical terms, such as subjective, objective, physical, metaphysical, historical, and others. There is an erroneous impression in the popular mind that if Jesus did not rise physically from the dead then the resurrection was not an historical fact. This is an error. A fact is merely a name for a true proposition. If it is a true proposition, and there is no reason to doubt that it is, that the disciples of Jesus believed that they saw Him alive after His death, then that belief is a *fact;* and as that belief is also matter of history, it is an historical fact. Apostolic belief in the resurrection is therefore an historical fact. Also, as there is no reason to doubt that Christ is alive now and that He was, in fact, present in spirit with His disciples at the time He was believed by them to be present with them in the body, scientific theology is justified in speaking of the resurrection of Christ as an historical fact. He was seen, however, by His disciples in subjective spiritual vision, and not in objective physical fact. This spiritual vision, however, was as great a miracle as a physical resurrection would have been and, unlike the latter, it involved no breach of natural or moral law. Another strong item of evidence confirming the view that the resurrection was a spiritual vision and not a physical appearance is

furnished by the historical fact of the Jews' indifference to the claims of Christ. If the popular exegesis of the Gospels is correct and they are accurate narratives, not merely of a temporary phase of religious belief which, during the time it lasted, was a psychological historical fact, but also of an actual historical fact which was physical in its nature, then the indifference of the Jews to the claims of Christ would have been unnatural. If the resurrection had been a physical fact, then the secular history of the time would have been bursting with records of it in every shape and form. In such a case the indifference of the Jews to the claims of Christ would have been against nature. It would have been an impossibility. The facts, however, which are known to be facts, that the Jews were indifferent to the claims of Christ and that the secular history of the time passes by the stupendous physical phenomenon of the resurrection in absolute silence, afford presumptive evidence so strong as to be almost irresistible of the fact that the resurrection was metaphysical and not physical. As, however, this evidence does not stand alone, but is only confirmatory of masses of other evidence all tending to the same conclusion, it carries a large proportion of the overwhelming weight of the whole of which it is a part. The resurrection of Christ, accordingly, was a spiritual resurrection, and the story of a physical resurrection which is unhappily taught

as "theology" to the English people on the authority of the State, is not Scripture, but scholastic misinterpretation of Scripture.

It is interesting to note the spirit in which this question is approached by the accredited representatives of the Anglican Establishment.

The *Times* of November 21, 1887, published a remarkable letter by a distinguished Canon of the English Church. The letter referred to a controversy that had been going on in the paper for some time about a question of fact. As regards this question of fact, with which we are not here immediately concerned, the force of evidence inclined to the side of the distinguished dignitary of the Church; but the latter was not content with the evidence which was on his side. He thought proper to seize the opportunity to give the world a lesson in psychological science, and his letter concludes with the following remarkable passage:—

"Men have asked how, if our Saviour really rose from the dead and was seen by a great many persons, it was possible for Jews and others to reject His claims as they did. Our experience shows that when the human will is strongly disposed to ignore the practical consequences of a fact, it has a subtle and almost unlimited power of blinding the intellect even to the most elementary laws of evidence."

This is a very remarkable utterance. It affords material for a volume on moral philosophy. The

remarks we shall permit ourselves to make about it shall be short and to the point. In the first place, if the resurrection had been physical it would have afforded no confirmation of the claims of Christ. As Christ Himself points out in the Sermon on the Mount, the test of divinity is inflexibility in carrying out natural law without abatement of "jot" or "tittle." To say therefore that a proof of divinity could be given by swerving from that inflexibility is to utter a paradox. It is to affirm in the domain of metaphysics what, in the domain of mathematics, would be called an "absurdity." At the same time we must remember that the Jews would not have been aware of this, and our knowledge of the laws that govern the human mind point irresistibly to the conclusion that if the event had occurred as narrated the Jews would have acknowledged Christ. The fact therefore that they did not do so affords strong presumptive evidence that the event did not occur. The Church of England rejects this evidence. Why? Because "our experience shows that when the human will is strongly disposed to ignore the practical consequences of a fact, it has a subtle and almost unlimited power of blinding the intellect even to the most elementary laws of evidence."

In other words, the Church of England claims to reject, because it conflicts with a preconceived idea of her own, evidence so powerful that none more

powerful can be imagined, on the plea that our experience shows that people are sometimes indifferent to evidence that tells against a favourite theory. This code of ethics would justify the universal rejection of all evidence that tells against the preconceived idea of the authority that has the power of acceptance and rejection. The attitude, as illustrated by this letter, of the English Church towards the knowledge which it has pleased God in His wisdom in these latter days to pour like tropical rain upon the earth, is accurately described and accounted for in the last paragraph of the remarkable letter under review: "Our experience shows that when the human will is strongly disposed to ignore the practical consequences of a fact, it has a subtle and almost unlimited power of blinding the intellect even to the most elementary laws of evidence."

We have, however, dwelt too long on a single concrete incident of revelation. It is time to revert to consideration of revelation in the abstract. Revelation simply means that which is *revealed;* and to *reveal* is to cause a true idea to pass into the consciousness of the person to whom the revelation is made. The idea of revelation rightly interpreted does not include the idea of verification or proof. The fact of a revelation having been made is independent of the circumstance of whether the idea that forms the subject of the revelation is or is not objectively true. Human knowledge is a

form of Divine revelation, though it is not usually so called. The main difference between revelation and human knowledge consists in this, that the latter can and the former cannot be verified.

The idea of revelation, accordingly, does not include the idea of legal evidence; but does include the idea of strong presumptive evidence based on the uniformity of nature and the unity of principle underlying and explaining the analogies of natural law. Take, for example, the idea that forms part of the Christian revelation, and is usually spoken of as the hope of eternal life.

This idea or hope exists as a matter of fact in the consciousness of Gentile or Western civilization. How did it come there? It was put into that consciousness by God. How do we know that? The answer to this question indicates another of the many points where scriptural or scientific theology parts company from the artificial doctrine of the Church. According to the doctrine of the Church the teaching of the Bible is Divine and comes from God, but secular knowledge is human and has been found out by man himself. According to the teaching of scientific theology both kinds of knowledge come equally from God. The only difference is that secular knowledge can be verified, and the hope of eternal life cannot be verified. How, then, do we know that the doctrine of eternal life is true? We know that it is true through our knowledge of the law of evolution. The idea has

been developed through the centuries, and is still being developed in obedience to the law of evolution; and while, in obedience to that law, the form of the idea has been constantly changing, the substance of the idea remains and must continue to remain permanent. The instinct of self-preservation in mankind will never allow the human race to give up the idea. It is no more possible for the human race to surrender the idea than it is possible for the human race to surrender the idea of sexual love. An occasional individual or sect of philosophers may give it up, but the race cannot. Now, of all these metaphysical facts God is the origin and first cause. God in the beginning sowed the idea in the consciousness of primeval man, and He is also the executive of the natural law of evolution, which has kept the idea in a continuous process of development ever since.

It is hardly likely that God would have taken such pains to make the hope of eternal life permanent in the human mind merely to deceive mankind. That is not the character of God that is revealed in natural phenomena or in the New Testament. The presumptive evidence, therefore, is overwhelming that points towards the conclusion that there must be objective truth to be realized beyond the grave corresponding to the hope of eternal life in the consciousness of mankind. It will be seen, however, that the foundation of this hope is laid in recognition of the divinity of

natural causation. Now, recognition of the divinity of natural causation is a fundamental idea of the Bible. The First Commandment of the Christian Decalogue is a prohibition of the immorality of denying the divinity of natural causation. To deny the divinity of natural causation is to sap the foundations alike of morality and of religion. The dogma of the divinity of natural causation is a fundamental dogma of scriptural revelation. Scholastic doctrine is the expression of denial by implication of this divinity; and it is scholastic doctrine that has destroyed religious belief all over Europe, so far as religious belief has been destroyed there; and it has been destroyed there to a very considerable extent. These are the foundations of revelation. The foundations of revelation are laid in natural law, and are not laid, as the Church of England erroneously teaches, in violations of natural law. No violation of natural law, even if it had occurred, could verify revelation. We are not to believe that Christianity is true because Jesus of Nazareth suspended natural laws, but because Christ planted and God gave the increase to the Christian ethical and spiritual idea in the consciousness of mankind. The suspensions, reversals and violations of natural law, apparently but not really imputed to Jesus of Nazareth in the Gospels, stand to the hope of eternal life in the mind of mankind in the relation, not of cause as is erroneously taught by the

Church, but of effect. The popular belief that these reversals of natural law actually took place, and are the cause and not the effect of the hope of eternal life in the mind of mankind, is not Scripture but scholastic misinterpretation of Scripture. It will be seen that scriptural Christianity opposes no intellectual difficulties to belief. All the intellectual difficulties of which we hear so much in current literature are of artificial manufacture. They are scholastic, artificial, and academical or, as the Scriptures themselves put it, they are "made with men's hands." All the essential truths of Christianity are axiomatic in their nature. Any educated man possessing an elementary knowledge of metaphysics and whose mind had not been mutilated by denominational education, must recognize that his "intellectual difficulty" would lie in their rejection. All scriptural doctrine without exception is merely the law of evolution applied to spiritual matters, and that is the teaching of Christ Himself, although he does not of course use the word "evolution."

It is of great importance to remember that all our nineteenth century scientific knowledge is a part of Divine revelation. The physical truth revealed through modern science belongs to that form of revelation that appears to be human discovery and is technically called human discovery, but is not really human discovery; but the ethics, tests, standards and criteria of truth that have also come

to us through modern science belong to ethical and spiritual, and therefore to scriptural revelation. They are appointed by God to be used in the interpretation of Scripture. They are a part of the moral law and their rejection is a form of the immorality of idolatry. Modern scientific knowledge has profoundly modified religious belief. This is not a matter of speculation, but of fact. It is matter of historical fact. Science, therefore, is a part of theology. The modifications, however, of religious belief effected by the teaching of modern science have all been in the direction of bringing that belief back to the simple teaching of Christ and His Apostles. In other words, the effect of modern science has been to bring religious belief back to a point from which it had no moral right ever to depart.

The doctrines that are taught by the Church of England have of course a conventional and a legal, but they have no moral right to be called Christianity. Christianity consists of the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. No single syllable of Anglican doctrine was ever taught by Christ or His Apostles. Neither Christ or His Apostles ever heard of the doctrines of the English Church, and it is certain that if they had heard of them they would have disapproved of them, for they are as nearly as possible a direct contradiction of what Christ and His Apostles did in fact teach. Christ and His disciples taught that there is direct

relationship of natural cause and effect between life and character and conduct in this world and eternal life in the next. The Church of England denies by implication the divinity of natural causation, and promises eternal life in the next world to those who in this world can persuade themselves that human speculations respecting unfathomable mysteries, which must have been made unfathomable by God Himself of set purpose and design, are Divine revelation. In other words, the Church of England promises eternal life to those who break the Second Commandment; for crystallized human speculations respecting the unknown things of eternity are what are called in the Second Commandment graven images of things in heaven. This is not Christianity; nor could all the social conventions and legislatures in Europe make it Christianity. Christian theology is pure monotheism. It is, in the language of Christ Himself, the worship of a God who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth. That is Christian theology, and it is an impossibility that it can ever be touched by physical science in a hostile sense. What Christ declared to be true may reasonably be accepted as Christianity. It is a significant fact, however, that this true Christianity, endorsed by the teaching of Christ Himself, is called by the present generation "theism." It is a "note" of the present generation to substitute false sentiment for reason; and then when, as a result of this immoral action,

false sentiment comes—as it inevitably must come sooner or later—into collision with truth, to endeavour to strangle truth with a nickname.

Most of the heresies against which the Church has launched her thunderbolts during the two thousand years of her existence, are truths that have been strangled with nicknames. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, but this is true of most heresies. This reprehensible practice of strangling truth with nicknames is more common in the domain of politics at the present day than in that of theology technically so called. We say theology "technically so called" because politics, like physical science, is a branch of true theology. The practice of strangling truth with nicknames is very common in the political world, and has been elevated to the dignity of a fine art by the Liberal party in English politics. It need hardly be said that between true scriptural theology and politics there is the closest organic connection, as also there is between true scriptural theology and physical science. This is denied by certain contemporary schools of sectarian thought, but such denials carry no weight with minds capable of reasoning on the subject.

Moreover, those who deny these fundamental truths have their own interests to serve by the denial. This of course need not necessarily affect the good faith of the denial; but it is well to remember that those who deny the truth of the

close organic connection that subsists between theology and physical science, and between theology and politics, have their own interests to serve by such denial. The devotee of a sect who, in spite of reason, and in spite of the express declaration of the Scriptures themselves that they do not admit of verbal interpretation, persists in limiting them to a verbal exegesis, finds it to his interest to deny the connection between physical science and theology when physical science confirms the suggestions of reason and the teaching of the Bible. Similarly, the Liberal politician, who for private or party purposes banishes the Decalogue to Jupiter or Saturn, finds it convenient to say that theology, which contains the moral law, has no connection with politics. This, however, has been somewhat of a digression. The religion of the Bible and of Jesus Christ is pure monotheism. It is a religion which never can come into collision with physical science. It is the worship of a God who is a spirit in spirit and in truth. There is no objection to the word "theism" in itself. What is objectionable is the speaking of Christianity and theism as if they were two different things. The Christianity of the Bible and of Christ Himself was theism, and no other doctrine has a moral right to the name of Christianity. Legal right must not be confounded with moral right. No more immoral or dangerous teaching can be imagined than that which

confounds legality with morality. The State may make it legal to teach the people erroneous history, artificial ethics, and materialized metaphysics under the name of "theology"; but it cannot render moral the action of the institution that does this. It is important in this connection to recognize a fact that is universally true. That is that truth is an attribute, not of persons or institutions, but of propositions. That is to say, the truth of a proposition is to be determined by the nature of the proposition itself, and not by consideration of who the person or institution may be that states it. What is important about a saying is whether it is or is not true; not who the man is who said it. Of course, when we ourselves do not know whether a proposition is or is not true, and have no means of ascertaining, our opinion will be influenced by our knowledge of the character of the person who claims authority to instruct us on the subject; but we do not require his authority if we ourselves have the same means that he has of knowing the truth. Again, whatever his personal character may be, his authority is worthless if he uses tests, standards, ethics, or criteria of truth other than those of science. If, for example, he tells us that the truth of a proposition in theology or politics is to be determined by consideration of what church, or what politician or political party affirmed it, and not by the nature of the proposition itself, then his

standards of truth are different from those that have been divinely revealed to mankind by God through the instrumentality of modern science. In the supposed case, he may be compared to a merchant who uses false weights and measures. It is conceivable that a merchant who used false weights and measures might be a man of high character who honestly believed that his standards were correct. In that case we would not think it necessary to abuse the personality of the merchant, but we should get our goods elsewhere; nor is it desirable in the interests of morality that we should do otherwise.

The above are a few of the points it is well to keep in mind when considering the subject of faith, reason, and revelation.

Revelation and human knowledge have the same origin, but relate to different subjects. Modern physical science belongs both to human knowledge and to revelation. Under its aspect as a collection of physical facts, it belongs to human knowledge. Under its aspect as revealing to mankind the true standards, tests, ethics, and criteria of truth, it belongs to Divine revelation. Under this latter aspect it has every note of true Divine revelation. Scriptural revelation does not reveal to mankind transcendental matters, with which man has no practical concern while on earth, but draws his attention to simple truths which are well within the range of his reason, and

which are of vital importance to him both as regards this world and the next. So the revelations of modern science on the nature of truth reveal no transcendental standards, but draw the attention of mankind to standards of veracity which, being absolute, catholic, and universal, are identical with those of every-day life and common sense.

Judged by these standards, faith, reason, and revelation are in harmony with each other. Revelation rests on reason, as it is unreasonable to believe that God would have planted in the mind of mankind a hope of eternal life merely to deceive. The latter idea is untenable in the light of the knowledge revealed by the teaching of modern science respecting the phenomena of nature, of the truthfulness of the character of God. Faith is reason applied to the invisible things of God. It is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews, xi. 1.)

CHAPTER IV.

The Foundations of Morality.

"I am the Lord thy God: . . . . Thou shalt have no other Gods before me."—Exodus, xx. 2, 3.

In the month of December, 1885, an interesting article on the subject of India was published in one of the monthly reviews. It was written by a native of the country, and was altogether a remarkable fragment of literature, both on account of the perfection of its literary form and the depth of thought evinced in the subject-matter of the essay itself.

The article contained several allusions to the religions of the different peoples of India, as well as to the real living God who does actually govern the world. Speaking of the actual Governor of the universe, the writer described Him as one who makes His laws known exclusively by means of the suffering experienced by those who break them. This is a rational and reasonable view of God's dealings with mankind, and is unquestionably in a large measure true. It is not, however, altogether true. It is part of the truth, but not

the whole truth. The law of God, called the moral law, is revealed in the Bible.

The moral law is revealed in the Bible, but it is also revealed in the natural phenomena of history in the manner explained by the Indian essayist. It is incorrect to say that the moral law of the universe is made known to mankind *exclusively* by means of the suffering experienced by those who break it; and it is equally wrong to say that it is revealed *exclusively* in the Bible. The former error is the tempter of modern science, and the latter is the tempter of the Church. The former error is akin to atheism, and the latter to idolatry. In educating mankind in the moral law God makes use of both forms of revelation. The teaching of Scripture must be interpreted by the teaching of experience, and the teaching of experience must be read in the light of scriptural revelation. The phenomena of history are determined by natural laws, and these natural laws are learned by observation and experience. The moral law, then, that is binding upon mankind, may be said to be a commandment addressed to mankind bidding man to put himself into co-operation, so to speak, with natural law for the physical, moral, and spiritual benefit of the human family. In human affairs human freewill ends with the individual. If we grant for the sake of argument, that the individual possesses freewill, it is all that can be granted ; and even that is only apparently true.

When the individual associates others with him in his design, whatever it may be, the issues pass out of his hands; and the greater the number of those whom he associates with himself, the more completely do the issues pass out of his hands. In other words, when two or three are gathered together in a single intention or design, they may retain control over their purpose whatever it may be; but when more than that are gathered together in a single design the issues are determined by natural law. Now God is the executive of natural law in human affairs as well as of law in the natural phenomena of the physical universe; and in both these capacities he is personified in Scripture as the Jehovah of the Old Testament. God revealed as the Jehovah of the Old Testament corresponds to that conception that was in the mind of the Indian writer referred to in the opening paragraph of this chapter. He is the God who makes his laws known by the suffering experienced by those who break them. Thus, the God of the Old Testament may be regarded as the personification of the law that in politics and history is termed the economic law. Now, if human affairs were left exclusively to the operation of economic laws, civilization would be destroyed, and we should relapse into barbarism. To prevent this the economic law must be brought into organic unity with the ethical law, and this ethical law is intrusted by God to man to carry out.

As God is the executive of the natural or economic law, so man is the executive of the moral law; and the duty of man as the executive of the moral law is revealed in the New Testament, in the life, character and teaching of Christ and His Apostles. In the Old Testament, accordingly, we have God represented as sitting on His throne in heaven and acting as the executive of natural and economic law. In the New Testament He is represented as coming down from heaven to teach mankind the ethical law, by obedience to which man may co-operate with God for the physical, moral and spiritual happiness of the great human family on earth. This is one of the many meanings of the scriptural parable. According to this meaning of the parable, the God of the Old and New Testaments, the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New, are respectively the economic and the moral law personified.

In the Old Testament, God under the name of Jehovah is revealed in that capacity of apparently impersonal impartiality in which he is also revealed in the economic law that controls human affairs.

In the New Testament God is revealed under the name of Christ, in the more personal capacity of the Saviour of those who believe in Him and obey His moral law. Both revelations are parables, and the the student of scientific theology must be careful not to confound too closely the Christ of

the New Testament parable with the Jesus of Nazareth of history. The latter furnished the historical nucleus of the revelation, and—if we may use such a metaphor—sat as a model to the Divine artist for the portrait of his own character which God designed to give to mankind. Beyond this it is not safe to go. Scientific theology is bound by the moral law not to advance into the region of barren speculation. It may safely leave that unprofitable amusement to the churches and sects. It is also well to remember that although God is revealed in the Old Testament as the personification of the economic law, and in the New as the personification of the ethical law, we are not to suppose that the writers of the Old and New Testaments deliberately and consciously set to work to personify natural and moral law, and then called the results Jehovah and Christ. If the scriptural writers had done this deliberately and consciously, then the Bible would have been the word of the scriptural writers, and would not have been the Word of God. The fact that the scriptural writers wrote as they were inspired, but did not themselves know the full meaning of what they wrote, makes it correct to say that the Scriptures are not the word of the scriptural writers, but are the Word of God. It is part of the note of the conventional, scholastic misinterpretation of Scripture to limit the meaning of scriptural passages to the idea in the mind of the writer.

The ancient writers of the Scriptures did not personify natural law deliberately and consciously, but they did personify these laws instinctively and unconsciously, acting under the metaphysical pressure of a consciousness external to their own ; and the fact that they did so is an important one among those that combine to form the truth of the inspiration of Scripture.

The double fact that the writers of Scripture personified natural and moral law, and that they did so in obedience to a metaphysical pressure external to themselves, including as this double fact does the further fact that they did not describe any other artificial God of their own invention or of their own manufacture, serves to differentiate the Bible from the other sacred writings of the world. The difference between our Bible and the other sacred writings of the world is in a great measure due to the clearness with which the God of Scripture is identified with the natural causation of the universe, and also to the completeness of the scriptural parable as a whole. In considering the scriptural conception of God in connection with the subject of the foundations of morality, it is well to contrast the scriptural with the ecclesiastical conception. The latter is a corruption of the former, but the process of corruption has produced this result, that under the ecclesiastical conception of God the true foundation of ethics is inverted. The inflexible uniformity of nature is the true

foundation of the ethics of Christianity. Violations of the uniformity of nature constitute the foundation of the inverted ethics of the Church. The difference between the two systems of ethics, the ethics of revealed theology that rest on the natural law of the universe and the artificial ethics that rest on ecclesiastical, social, or State convention, will be seen more clearly if we place side by side the two conceptions of God, the true scriptural conception of scientific theology and the artificial conception of ecclesiastical and social convention. The scriptural conception of God is that of first cause of natural phenomena, and obviously no other conception can possibly be true. To our finite minds, however, natural phenomena do not suggest the idea of personality, but of impersonality. Also, to our superficial minds, they do not so much suggest the ideas of love and gentleness as of cruelty and indifference. Revealed theology corrects this finite superficial view. It consists mainly of revelation of the fact that natural causation is not a blind impersonal force, but is a person; and that the character of that person is not a character of cruelty and indifference, as natural phenomena seem to suggest, but is the character of Jesus Christ. Belief in these truths of revealed theology constitutes Christian faith according to the true meaning of the phrase. Let us now glance at the ecclesiastical conception of God. It will be perceived that it is something quite

different from the scriptural idea. It is, in fact, a conception that leads logically to a contradiction of the teaching of Christ. It is often said, and said with truth, that churchmen and churchwomen are good Christians, not as the result of the teaching of their Church, but in spite of that teaching. The ecclesiastical conception of God gets rid completely of the idea of natural causation, and substitutes for that idea the idea of an idealized human being. Instead of using the character of Christ to explain and describe the human personal character of natural causation, the Church practically denies the personality of natural causation, and substitutes for that true metaphysical conception an artificial, conventionally determined physical idea which taints the whole of the pseudo-theology that is built upon it with the corruption of materialism. It is important to notice that Church theology is materialism expressed in the vocabulary of idealism. The substitution in theology of the physical for the metaphysical idea necessarily introduces materialism into doctrine; for although the Church gets rid of the idea of the personality and divinity of natural causation, she cannot get rid of natural causation itself as a fact. Natural causation remains as a fact whatever the doctrines of the Church may be. Accordingly, the Church accepts the dogma of the materialists, that matter is noumenal or self-existent, that natural phenomena are unconscious and automatic, and that each

phenomenon is caused by its predecessor and is itself the cause of its successor. None of this teaching is scriptural, though it is taught in the vocabulary of Scripture. Nor is it so much misinterpretation as direct negation of scriptural teaching, for, as was pointed out in a previous chapter, the Sermon on the Mount repeatedly alludes to natural causation as a person under the name of the "Father." It is natural causation that clothes the lilies of the field, that charges itself with the care of the growth of the hairs of the head, that makes additions to the stature of men, and that guides the descent of the sparrow to the ground.

In the present chapter, however, which deals with the subject of the foundations of morality, we are chiefly concerned with the ethical consequences of the immoral teaching which substitutes materialism for idealism as the fundamental dogma of theology. The point we are about to notice is of immense practical importance. According to the teaching of Scripture, God is the first cause of all phenomena. This teaching is explained and shown to be reasonable by the science of metaphysics of which idealism is an axiom. According to the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, God carries out natural law without abatement of jot or tittle. This teaching is proved to be true by modern science. Now, all this is true, not merely in connection with the natural phenomena of the physical universe, but also in connection with the

social and political phenomena that make up human history. Hence, the results of human actions are determined by natural laws, and God is himself the executive of those natural laws.

Now, the substitution of materialism for idealism in the scholastic theology results in this paradoxical ethical position. The Church frequently, either directly or indirectly, sanctions a course of human action, or of human teaching, which must inevitably produce results disastrous to human society, and at the same time she prays to God to avert those disastrous results from society.

This is the result of the substitution in theology of the false dogma of materialism for the true dogma of idealism.

The word blasphemy in these days carries a conventional meaning, and therefore this action of the Church cannot be correctly described; but if religious education in this country were what it ought to be the true meaning of the word blasphemy would be understood.

It is essential to put the case as clearly as possible before our readers, to enable them to see how the ethical position is connected with and affected by the substitution of materialism for idealism as the fundamental dogma of theology. God, speaking both in nature and in the Bible, tells mankind that if certain things are done He, acting as the executive of natural law, will produce certain results disastrous to society. The Church either directly

commands those things to be done, or indirectly sanctions their being done and then prays to God to avert those disastrous results from society. It will be seen that in these proceedings the Church disconnects the idea of Divine agency from the idea of the natural causation that produces the disastrous results. She assumes that the natural causation that produces the disastrous results is either noumenal and automatic, or human agency acting independently of God, and she asks God to interfere with that noumenal and automatic or independent human action. But, in fact, the natural causation that produces the disastrous results is not independent, whether it be human agency or not, nor is it automatic, but it is the direct action of God himself, so that in the supposed case the prayers of the Church, so far as they mean anything, mean a request addressed to God to prevent something or some one else from doing that which he has sworn that he will do himself, which he has, metaphorically speaking, made a covenant with mankind binding himself to do. It is not easy to understand the intellectual position of men who can persuade themselves that there is anything good or moral or justifiable in such "religion" as this.

Perhaps the ethical result of substituting materialism for idealism in theological doctrine will be seen more clearly if we give a concrete illustration drawn from modern politics. It is part of what is called the "creed" of modern English Liberalism

that political questions, the decision of which must vitally affect for generations to come the happiness of millions of helpless human beings, should be referred for decision to the most illiterate and ignorant classes of the community; in other words, to those classes of the community that are most incapable of deciding them correctly. The Church, by lending her countenance to the false and immoral dogma that there is no connection between theology and politics, indirectly sanctions this wickedness. Then when God, carrying out natural law without abatement of jot or tittle, proceeds to disintegrate the British empire, the Church prays the He will preserve the empire. It is part of the "creed" of modern Liberalism that members of Parliament are not to be called on to give any guarantee to the nation that they are either intellectually or morally fit to make laws for a civilized and Christian people. The Church indirectly sanctions this wickedness, and apparently imagines that she condones her action in doing so by offering up periodical prayers for the "High Court" of Parliament, and by allowing one of her clergy to officiate as chaplain of the House of Commons. This is an example of how the substitution of materialism for idealism in theology affects the ethical element in human affairs. The God who is prayed to by the Church to avert national calamity from the English nation, is the same God who is bound by his covenant with mankind to

inflict national calamity upon all nations that trifle with his moral law. Idealism teaches this unity, and exposes the paradox of addressing prayers to God to avert national ruin when the God to whom the prayer is addressed is the same God who has sworn that He will Himself inflict the national ruin. Materialism separates the two conceptions, denies the personality and divinity of the natural causation that produces the national calamity, and is thus enabled to blind itself to the incongruity, not to say the blasphemy, of its idolatrous prayers. According to the strict law of Christian morality all prayers addressed to God asking God to produce certain results, are immoral if any natural means of producing the desired results have been neglected by those who offer up the prayers; and as the Christian ethics are catholic in the sense of being as obligatory upon nations and institutions as upon individuals, the same truth must apply to them. If, therefore, a nation as regards its foreign and domestic policy, or a church as regards its doctrinal teaching, deliberately elects to substitute false sentiment for reason based on recognition of the Divine authority of the natural laws of the universe, and if at the same time the Church offers up national prayers to God to save the nation from the evils of anarchy and infidelity, such prayers are a national immorality. By the natural laws of the universe, the substitution of false sentiment for reason as the controlling force in the

proceedings of Church and State must result in national anarchy and infidelity; and the God to whom the blasphemous prayers are addressed is the executive of the natural law by which the resulting anarchy and infidelity will be produced. You cannot gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles; nor can national happiness or religious belief be gathered from ecclesiastical or political lies. Both of these laws are parts of the same code, and God is the executive of both. "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* It is useless for any man to attempt to study scientific theology unless he is intellectually capable of grasping the ethical meaning that lies hidden in the natural law of the universe.

From the above remarks it will be seen that the foundations of Jewish, that is to say of scriptural theology, are laid in the true idea that God is the natural causation of the universe. Obviously, then, any "theology" which embodies a different conception of God from this is a teacher of artificial Gods, and this teaching of artificial Gods is what is prohibited in the First Commandment. Also, as no permanent foundation for a system of ethics can be found other than a theological one, the prohibition of the immorality of teaching artificial theologies must carry with it prohibition of the immorality of teaching artificial codes of morality. One difficulty

* St. Matthew, v. 18.

of bringing the truths of scientific theology home to the popular mind arises from the fact that in most countries the people are taught that whatever is done by their own authorities in Church and State must be right. It is true that in England this teaching is accompanied by moral aphorisms to the effect that God is greater than churches and states, and has even overthrown churches and states; but then this is always held to apply to states and churches other than the British empire and the Church of England. It is held to be bad taste, if not positively immoral, to hint that God might possibly one day destroy the English Church or break up the British empire.

For these reasons it is unlikely that scientific theology will ever be a popular science. Another difficulty arises from the fact that the people are taught that the churches and sects must determine what is the moral law. Obviously it cannot be easy to make people, impressed by this erroneous teaching, understand that the churches and sects may themselves be breakers of the moral law.

The artificial theology taught in England has produced this baneful result, that it is a hopeless task to separate in the mind of an ordinary Englishman the idea of religion and Christianity, on the one hand, from the idea of the Church or some ecclesiastical sect on the other. Yet if men were taught to reason about theology as they ought to be, and as they are taught to reason about other

sciences, they would know that if all the churches in Christendom were to be swept into the sea the great ethical and spiritual truths of which exclusively true Christianity consists would still remain facts as impregnable as the great truths of mathematics, which latter truths are a part of Christianity. At the same time, the inseparability in the popular mind of the two ideas, the Church and Christianity, may reasonably be read as indicating that it is the design of God that in the distant future the Church shall be reformed and taught to see the folly of teaching untruth. To return to the Decalogue, regarded as containing a divine revelation of the foundations of morality.

There are no passages in Scripture which convey so strongly as do the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount the idea of inspiration, as attaching to them. One explanation of this is the strong presence in these wonderful fragments of sacred literature of the idea of the personality and divinity of natural causation. These two fragments of inspired literature may be said to epitomize all that is essential in the Christian revelation. They both give powerful expression to the profound metaphysical truth that the foundation of ethics is laid in natural law. The Decalogue consists of concrete precepts, and the Sermon on the Mount developes those concrete precepts into abstract principles. Thus, the concrete precept, Thou shalt not kill, is developed

into the abstract principle of brotherly love; and the concrete precept, Thou shalt not commit adultery, is developed into the abstract principle of chastity. This furnishes the key to the interpretation of the moral law. We must go behind the concrete precept in order to get at the underlying abstract principle, and then develop the underlying abstract principle by applying to it the idea of evolution or development. Thus, from the Fifth Commandment we develop the abstract principle of the sanctity of the idea of the family; from the Eighth Commandment, the abstract principle of honesty in human affairs ; from the ninth the abstract principle of truthfulness in human affairs, and from the first, second, and third, the abstract principles of truthfulness and intellectual honesty in metaphysical thought, that is to say, in theology and politics. Now the abstract principles that compose the moral law of God, and are veiled in the Decalogue behind concrete precepts that appear to be mere arbitrary orders, when looked at in the light of our knowledge of the natural laws that govern the actions of mankind in the aggregate, are recognized as being commandments which the race at large must obey under penalties. Here then, is the test of a Divine commandment. A Divine commandment is a commandment which, though individuals may disregard it, must be obeyed by the race at large under penalties. The commandments of the Decalogue fulfil this test,

and are therefore rightly called the commandments of God. The commandments of God are commandments which must be obeyed by mankind in the aggregate. Disobedience on a small scale by individuals often escapes with impunity; but when the disobedience is on a large scale, as in the case of nations, churches, ecclesiastical sects, or political factions, and is prolonged for a certain time, penalty follows disobedience, and this penalty is inflicted by natural laws. Hence in the case of the race at large, and of nations and institutions, the instinct of self-preservation in human society finds itself ultimately enlisted on the side of the moral law. It may also be observed as a matter of fact, that in civilized states the human law or code of *legality* corresponds more or less closely with the ethical law or code of *morality*. It is true that the legal codes of modern European States are derived from Christianity, but then Christianity rests upon natural laws.

That this code in its main outline is compulsory is proved by the similarity of the codes of legality of Christian States to those of semi-civilized nations that are not Christian. Besides, the attempt has been made in civilized States to get rid of the code of legality that is founded on the Christian ethics, and to substitute for it a code constructed on lines of what is called pure reason. These attempts have always failed through the operation of natural laws, and their failure in the future

is assured by the same natural laws. The experiment has been tried in France. The result has been a century of revolutions apparently destined sooner or later to culminate in complete anarchy; and it may be confidently predicted that any other nation that tries the same experiment will meet with the same experience. It is in fact now established truth that the moral law is compulsory upon mankind under penalties; that the penalties are inflicted by natural law; and that the moral law which is thus supported by the natural law of the universe is identical with the moral code of the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount. The natural law of the universe referred to here, is the natural human instinct of self-preservation acting in obedience to natural laws. The natural human instinct of self-preservation acts in obedience to natural laws, and this is the meaning of saying that the ethics of Christianity are under the protection of, supported by, and enforced by natural law. We have frequent occasion to use the phrase, and as it is open to criticism from the point of view of the pedant or the grammarian, it may be convenient to give this short definite explanation of what it means.

It means that the instinct of self-preservation in aggregate mankind, is one of the natural forces of the universe; that this force acts in obedience to natural laws, and that one result of its doing so

is that nations are compelled to frame codes of legality which shall be more or less approximations to the code of morality of the Decalogue or ethics of Christianity. This is the meaning of saying that the ethics of Christianity are under the protection of and are enforced by natural laws. This statement, however, only applies to the larger human organisms. The life of the individual is too short for him to be overtaken by natural penalties. Sometimes natural penalties follow individual wrong-doing, but not always. Society has, of course, a moral right to protect itself, and it must punish individual actions that tend to injure it; but the punishment must not be the expression of vengeance or retribution. It must aim exclusively at the protection of society. For this purpose its design should be either to deter others from committing the same crime or the moral education of the offender. In the case, however, of the individual, the advantage to him of the organic connection between the natural and moral law consists in this that he can ascertain for himself in most cases, and with almost mathematical precision, what the moral law in fact is, assuming that he desires to obey it. As we have seen, human society is compelled by natural laws to frame codes of legality under which certain forms of human action are prohibited. As God is the executive of the natural law that compels human society to frame these codes, it stands to reason

that the forms of human action which the nations of the earth are compelled by those natural laws to treat as crimes, must be breaches of the commandments of God.

Thus, the fact that the ethics of Christianity rest on the natural law of the universe, makes it possible for the individual, assuming that he desires to obey God, to determine in most cases with mathematical precision what morality is and what it is not. The point on which we are now touching is one of great importance. Its importance, in fact, cannot be exaggerated. It relates to the difference between the objective and subjective foundations of morality.

According to the subjective theory of the foundation of morality, right and wrong is mere matter of opinion. It can be determined by sentiment, by a "consensus of opinion," by votes, by counting heads, by popular clamour, and other similar methods, all of which are merely different ways of saying that it cannot be determined at all. This view of the foundations of morality is part of the creed of the Protestant Church, and of the Liberal party in English politics. The opposite view, that the foundations of morality are objective, is the teaching of Scripture, of the Roman Catholic Church, and of true scientific theology. No question of more vital importance to mankind can well be imagined. Its ultimate solution is a foregone conclusion, but there are indications in the political

world that much trouble is in store for mankind before it is finally settled. In determining the moral law for himself, the individual should reason in this way. He should say: "What God, by means of His natural laws, has taken such pains to make it impossible for the race to allow to be done, it must be wrong for the individual to do. The scriptural prohibitions, therefore, of murder, adultery, stealing, slander, lying and idolatry must in fact be what they claim to be—commandments of God." These are the foundations of morality. It will be seen that the law of God, or moral law, is that law disobedience to which ultimately provokes retribution, so to speak, at the hands of natural law. It is that law disobedience to which, on a large scale and prolonged for a certain time, ultimately compels the instinct of self-preservation in human society to assert itself. In this way the social instinct of self-preservation is enlisted on the side of the moral law, and when education spreads, as it is now beginning to do, it is reasonable to believe that the community will begin to understand the connection between natural and moral law, the consequent objectivity of the latter, and the danger to civil and religious liberty of all "creeds," whether philosophical, ecclesiastical, or political, that treat the moral law as subjective or mere matter of opinion. When the Scriptures are correctly interpreted in the light of our nineteenth century knowledge of natural laws, it is perceived

that the ethics of Christianity are a part of the same catholic code of the universe that the planets and stars obey. As the ethics of Christianity are under the protection of natural laws that will gradually come to be understood, it seems probable that our current attempts to render permanent ecclesiastical or political systems in which those laws are trifled with, will be regarded by posterity as a form of insanity.

When this time arrives it is not unlikely that many men, who now occupy high ecclesiastical or political positions, will be placed by posterity on the intellectual plane that is occupied in our minds —to borrow an illustration from a letter that recently appeared in the *Times*—by those who in former days clamoured for the burning of a witch, or yelled at the sun to put a stop to an eclipse. It may indeed be questioned if the world has ever witnessed anything stranger in the form of psychological phenomena than the ideas expressed in many of the utterances of some of the public men of our day who are deemed "experts" in the two great metaphysical sciences of theology and statesmanship. Of these psychological phenomena not the least strange is the unconsciousness of the sectarian ecclesiastics and Liberal politicians who mislead the people, of the unsoundness not merely of their own intellectual, but also of their own ethical position. It is the note of clericalism in theology and Liberalism in politics to deny the

natural foundation of ethics. All artificial systems of ethics express by implication denial of the fundamental truth of scriptural theology, that the foundation of ethics is laid in natural laws. The denial is implied in all artificial systems of ethics, for when nature supplies a perfect foundation, why should men go out of their way to construct an imperfect artificial one? No permanent science of ethics can ever be constructed of which the foundations are not laid in theology. Formerly, this meant that morality was to be determined by the authority of the Church. It now means that morality is to be determined in the light of our knowledge of natural laws. There is no reason inherent in the nature of things why this also should not one day come to be done by a reformed Catholic Church.

The foundations of morality must be laid in theology, but then the theology must be true. An artificial academical theology can only serve temporarily as a foundation of ethics. A system of ethics of which the foundation is laid in natural laws, is based on scriptural theology because the Scriptures teach that natural causation is not unconscious, but conscious; is not impersonal, but personal; is not cruel and indifferent, but loving and gentle. All artificial systems of morality must sooner or later collapse. Whether made by political parties, by ecclesiastical sects, or by coteries of philosophers, sooner or later they must all fail. They deserve to fail, they must fail,

and they will fail; and their inevitable failure when it comes—and come it must and will—will be part of the moral government of the world by natural laws. At the present moment in England we live, move, and have our being in the midst of innumerable sects, factions, and coteries, ecclesiastical, political, and philosophical, each with its own peculiar, private, sectarian, academical theory of faith and morals. The shrieking, screaming, howling, wrangling, and cursing of these different sects, factions, and coteries take up a not inconsiderable space in the daily newspapers.

These different sectarian creeds, ecclesiastical, political, and philosophical, have one, and only one, point of agreement. They all equally express a supercilious contempt for truth, reason, and common sense.

As a result of this the tendency of the literature that is composed of their bickerings is to demoralize the people, and the rapidity with which this demoralizing process is proceeding is very visible in the politics of the day. Most of the artificial codes of morality now under consideration may be grouped into two classes, those which are based on a false theology, and those which are based on no theology at all; and of the two, the latter are the less mischievous. Idolatry, it must never be forgotten, is merely the scriptural name for academical theology; and its prohibition in the Decalogue as part of the moral law of the universe rests upon the same foundation as the prohibitions in the same

sacred code of the more secular immoralities, so to speak, called murder, adultery, and stealing. Like the prohibitions of murder, adultery, and stealing in the Decalogue, the prohibition of idolatry, or artificial theology, is based on natural laws; and the penalty for persistent idolatry will be enforced by natural laws. The statement, therefore, that the ethics of Christianity are under the protection of and will be enforced by natural laws, is as true of the part of the Decalogue that relates to idolatry, or theological immorality, as it is to that which relates to what may be called secular immorality. As surely as the nation that disregards the Divine commandments that decree the sanctity of human life, the purity of women, and respect for property is doomed to perish, so surely will the same fate overtake the nation that surrenders its intellect and conscience to artificial theologies, or to the academical codes of ethics that are based upon them. The different philosophical, ecclesiastical, and political sects whose creed it is that morality can be based on convention, affirm that it is not possible to found a true objective morality on theology. The answer is, a true objective morality can be based upon a true interpretation of Scripture, but cannot be based upon a false interpretation of Scripture. All Scriptural exegeses are false that lose sight of the fact that the God of the Old and New Testaments is natural causation personified; and all codes of

ethics that are founded on such exegeses, must necessarily, in the nature of things, be subjective, and therefore, in fact, spurious. Such codes of morality may answer for a time, and even answer well as working hypotheses; but in the long run they must break down and deliver those who have put their trust in them to anarchy and chaos. Some men have gone so far as to write bulky volumes to prove that there can be no such thing as a true science of ethics based on theology. A work of this kind is the "Science of Ethics," of Mr. Leslie Stephen. Mr. Stephen apparently makes the common mistake of confounding the teaching of the Church, which is founded on misinterpretation of Scripture and conventionally called "theology," with real theology. Of course to the multitude the word "theology" means this, and cannot mean any thing else than this; but a man of Mr. Stephen's intellectual calibre might have been expected to hold the reasonable view that "theology" in its ultimate signification must mean, not what a certain set of men choose to assert about God, but of what is, in fact, true about God. Some of Mr. Stephen's fallacies have been taken up and quoted as if they were inspired truths by the literary organs of the scholastic idolatry. In the number of the *Church Quarterly Review* for July, 1886, there is a review of Dr. Martineau's work on "Types of Ethical Theory." In this article the writer, possibly a clergyman of the Church of Eng-

land, veils beneath a denunciation of pantheism a distinct denial by implication of the fundamental dogma of Scriptural theology that God is the first cause of all phenomena. His reason for this formidable negation is not perhaps stated so bluntly as we are about to state it, but it can be read between the lines of the ecclesiastical phraseology in which the essay is composed. The reason relates to this very question of the foundation of morality, and the writer quotes Mr. Leslie Stephen approvingly, and adopts a curious phrase of his about putting God "on both sides of the equation," as if it justified this common ecclesiastical negation.

Generally, ecclesiastical negation of the Divine action in natural phenomena is rather implied indirectly in doctrine than directly expressed; but in the article in the *Church Quarterly Review* it is almost directly expressed. The reasoning is of course simple enough, and at first sight plausible enough. It is to this effect. If God is the first cause of all phenomena, He is as much the first cause of those natural human desires that tempt men to sin as He is of the good impulse to resist temptation that man derives from the Bible. Then comes the conclusion in which resides that powerful ingredient of immorality that makes the ethical teaching of the scholastic idolatry so repulsive to healthy minds. It is this conclusion also that vitiates ecclesiastical morality by making it subjective, or mere matter of opinion. Of course, when morality becomes

mere matter of opinion it has for practical purposes ceased to exist. The obvious conclusion is that God is not the first cause of all phenomena. When we have reached this conclusion, it is of course a matter of choice what phenomena we do and what we do not ascribe to the Divine action; and those modern schools of philosophy that decline to ascribe any phenomenon at all to the Divine action —or, in plain English, assert that there is no God, —are only pushing to its logical conclusion the teaching of the *Church Quarterly Review*. The reasoning is very clear, but it is what is called "bastard rationalism," because the conclusion does not follow necessarily from the reasoning. If—so apparently argues Mr. Leslie Stephen fallaciously, and the *Church Quarterly Review*, approving of, accepting, and adopting the fallacy as its own—you put God on both sides of the equation, you cannot deduce a moral law from one side of the equation more than from the other. This reasoning is fallacious, but we do not call it bastard rationalism for that reason. It is fallacious because Mr. Leslie Stephen omits from the problem with which he is dealing the important factor of evolution.

This is an error in the reasoning, but it is not bastard rationalism. Bastard rationalism consists in drawing a conclusion which does not necessarily flow from the reasoning, because it happens to harmonize with a preconceived idea. If you put God on both sides of the equation, argues Mr. Leslie

Stephen, you cannot deduce a moral law from one side more than from the other. Then comes the conclusion of the *Church Quarterly Review.*

Therefore—so argues in substance the writer in the *Church Quarterly Review*, who is, however, himself, no doubt, unconscious of the underlying atheism of his illegitimate reasoning—don't put God on both sides of the equation. Boldly deny that God is the first cause of all phenomena.

The article in the *Church Quarterly Review* to which we are now alluding will well repay perusal. It shows the artificial theology of the nation in process of manufacture, and sufficiently accounts for the growth of scepticism, atheism, and infidelity in England. It is difficult to understand what the intellectual or ethical position of men who write like this can possibly be. A distinguished writer of the day used the phrase a "moral miracle," to describe certain phases of the scholastic mind as expressed in modern controversy. The phrase an "immoral miracle" is less courteous, but it seems to describe with greater accuracy the state of mind that can draw from the premise that God is on both sides of every equation the conclusion that Anglican priests possess a moral right to remove Him from the side of the equation where they find His presence inconvenient.

Whatever the *Church Quarterly Review* may find it convenient to teach, it is a double fact that

God is the first cause of all phenomena, and that the Scriptures expressly tell us that He is so. If there is a God who has nothing to do with phenomena, or of whom any phenomenon whatever is independent, it is perfectly certain that the Scriptures tell us nothing whatever about Him; and that the God to whom the Scriptures do introduce us is the first cause of all phenomena, and no other God. The reasoning of the *Church Quarterly Review* affords an admirable illustration of the identity of nineteenth century artificial theology with the idolatry condemned in the moral law delivered to the Jews several thousands of years ago.

The Church first constructs her code of morality and then manufactures her theology to fit it. That is the real meaning of the conclusion drawn from Mr. Leslie Stephen's argument about putting God on both sides of the equation. As—according to Mr. Leslie Stephen's reasoning, which, however, is fallacious—you can't deduce a code of morality from a theology which puts God on both sides of every equation, reject that theology and substitute for it an artificial theology of your own. That is in substance the reasoning of the *Church Quarterly Review.* The immorality of this reasoning is increased by the fact that the substituted artificial theology retains the vocabulary of Scripture, from which it has, in fact, parted company.

Mr. Leslie Stephen is logical and consistent, and

his ethical creed, though erroneous, is morally justifiable from his point of view. He is apparently arguing that morality is mere matter of opinion, or subjective; and he deduces that conclusion from the premise that God must be on both sides of every equation, and that therefore an objective morality cannot be deduced from theology. All this is perfectly logical and consistent. The Church, however, is in a different intellectual position. She is hampered by the dogma that morality is objective and *must* be deduced from theology; and as she cannot deduce an objective ethic from a theology that puts God on both sides of every equation, she boldly gets rid of that theology. She gets rid of that theology, with its inconvenient God who is on both sides of every equation, and substitutes for it an artificial theology, manufactured by herself. Needless to say, this artificial theology contains an accommodating "God," whom she can always place on any side of any equation she pleases. Is it not strange, in the presence of such teaching as this, that churchmen should fail to see in the coming disestablishment and disendowment of their Church an example of the moral government of the world by natural laws? The above, perhaps somewhat bluntly expressed, is the meaning of the article in the *Church Quarterly Review*. This illustration also serves to explain what is meant in this book by the term artificial theology. Artificial theology, or theology

" made with men's hands," is the theology that is made by men who describe God as they think He ought to be, who, in doing so, disregard the ascertained and established knowledge in the possession of mankind respecting who and what God actually is, even when that ascertained and established knowledge of God is confirmed by the teaching of Scripture.

It is curious to notice also how such writers as this one of the *Church Quarterly Review* disregard not only the teaching of Scripture when it suits them to do so, but even the creeds of their own Church. The creeds of the Church of England flatly contradict the idolatrous negations of the *Church Quarterly Review.* " I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." If the God referred to in that sublime clause of the Nicene Creed is not the first cause of all phenomena it is difficult to understand the plain meaning of language. Protestant theologians, like Liberal politicians, however, don't trouble themselves about consistency. There is one point of great importance in connection with artificial theology-which may as well be mentioned here. That is the close relationship that exists between atheism and idolatry. This relationship—like other facts of scientific theology — cannot easily be brought home to the popular mind, because the great superficial majority of mankind are swayed by

vocabularies and not by ideas, and cannot therefore distinguish between atheism expressed in the vocabulary of theology, and theology. Moreover, ecclesiastical atheism or negation is unconscious. It would not be correct to call the writer in the *Church Quarterly Review* an atheist. Probably he is a deeply religious man according to his light, or the darkness which he mistakes for light. The atheism, however, or negation is present in his teaching although he himself is unconscious of it. Now, it is a curious fact in scientific theology that the germ of atheism in ecclesiastical teaching, of which we have seen an example in the article in the *Church Quarterly Review*, is the cause of the scepticism, atheism, and infidelity that is spreading so rapidly in this country. The national scepticism, atheism, and infidelity are the natural fruit of the germ of atheism that underlies the teaching of such publications as the *Church Quarterly Review*. Obviously, from rejecting God as the first cause of those phenomena where His presence on both sides of the equation is inconvenient as clashing with our preconceived notions of what the law of the universe ought to be, to rejecting him altogether and making all phenomena independent of Him, is but a step. It will be seen, therefore, that the tenets of that peculiar modern philosophy to which we give the name of "atheism," are the logical outcome of those of the *Church Quarterly Review*. Thus, the germ of negation that underlies all

idolatry establishes a close relationship between idolatry and atheism. There is a chain of natural psychical causation between idolatrous ecclesiastical teaching, regarded as seed, and national scepticism, atheism, and infidelity, regarded as fruit. There is, in fact, at work in the matter a kind of natural law of psychical or metaphysical botany, referred to by Christ in that passage where He tells His disciples that they cannot expect to gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles.

The connection between the two forms of metaphysical error, atheism and idolatry, is very simple. Some philosopher—Voltaire probably—has said that if there were no God it would be necessary to invent one. He, however, omitted to point out that the converse of His proposition is equally true.

If it is necessary to invent a God, there cannot be a real one. This explains the natural causation of the metaphysical botany just mentioned. When men find ecclesiastical writers deliberately manufacturing or inventing a God to suit popular sentiment, or their own narrow views of what the laws of the universe ought to be, they inevitably, though unconsciously, leap to the conclusion—for the most perfect reasoning of the aggregate human mind is done by unconscious cerebration—that there is no God. Hence, national infidelity is the natural result and fruit of all scholastic teaching in theology which allows its professors to select

for themselves whether they will or will not put God on both sides of equations. The natural laws of psychological botany are at work here. You cannot gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles; and from this law—in common with all other natural laws—one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass till all be fulfilled.

It is now time to close this chapter. In it we have explained the meaning, according to strict scientific theology, of the First Commandment of the Christian Decalogue. God is a spirit. All academical theology therefore, which substitutes physical for ethical and spiritual interpretation of Scripture embodies violation of the First Commandment. God is the first cause of all natural phenomena and speaks to mankind in the natural force and natural law of the universe. We must, therefore, approach the study of the Bible armed with an *à priori* determination to interpret all apparent violations of natural law recorded therein as parables, and not as physical facts.

God, speaking to us in nature, commands us to interpret the Bible in this way and when we are told otherwise by the *Church Quarterly Review* we should remember that the voice is the voice of God which speaks to us in nature, and that the voice in the *Church Quarterly Review* is a human voice; and also that we are commanded by the Christian religion to obey God rather than man. These are a few of the truths that are taught by the

First Commandment of the Christian Decalogue. When its meaning is once grasped, all the so-called "intellectual difficulties" of theology vanish. They are all of them artificial difficulties manufactured by human artists whose action in manufacturing them has been and is itself a breach of the First Commandment.

It is not always lawful to take texts from different parts of Scripture and string them together in a chain of reasoning, but it is sometimes legitimate to do so. The following three texts form a correct chain of reasoning:—

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis, i. 1.)

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (St. John, iv. 24.)

"I am the Lord thy God, . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus, xx. 2, 3.)

CHAPTER V.

Idealism.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."—Revelation, iii. 14, 15, 16.

The Bampton Lectures for 1884, by Dr. Temple, Bishop of London, were republished in 1885 in a single volume called "The Relations between Religion and Science." A review of the work appeared in April, 1885, in the *Westminster Review.* The *Westminster Review* is a brilliant periodical of the time, which plays the part of an advocate in support of the creed of modern materialism and modern scepticism. It is a very useful exercise in scientific theology to study the controversies between the popular theology and the schools of philosophy that are represented by such works as the *Westminster Review.*

In doing so the student must be careful to remember what has been so often insisted upon

here, namely, that the controversy is not, in fact, what it appears to be. It appears to be a controversy between materialism and theology; but is, in fact, a conflict between plain, honest, naked materialism expressed in its rightful secular vocabulary, and ecclesiastical materialism expressed in the idealistic vocabulary of Scripture. It is a conflict between secular rejection of Scripture and ecclesiastical misinterpretation of Scripture; and is mistaken by the superficial multitude for a conflict between religion and science. The modern schools of thought that reject Scripture have all been called into existence by ecclesiastical misinterpretation of Scripture; and it may also be said with accuracy that all the intellectual weapons that are directed against theology by modern sceptical philosophy are put into the hands of that philosophy by the Church.

Much will be found to illustrate and confirm this view in the Bishop of London's Bampton Lecture, and the criticism on it in the *Westminster Review*. In this particular chapter we are not concerned with Dr. Temple's book, except in so far as it serves to introduce us to a remark made about it by the *Westminster Review*. Speaking of the hopelessness of Dr. Temple's attempt to maintain his intellectual position, the writer in the *Westminster Review* concludes his essay with the following peroration: Dr. Temple's "failure, so

far as the philosophy of his system is concerned, is merely another illustration of the truism that there is no mean between idealism and materialism but the mean of logical inconsistency." This statement is an example of what has just been mentioned. It is a weapon directed against theology by the sceptical philosophy, and put into the hands of that philosophy by the Church of England. The statement itself is perfectly true. It is as correct a statement as can be found in mathematics. The answer to the *Westminster Review* is of course that which has been indicated already so often in this book. Scriptural theology *is* idealism, and the "mean of logical inconsistency," in which the Bishop of London finds himself landed by his efforts to establish a compromise between truth and error, is *not* Scriptural theology. It is convenient to consider this statement of the *Westminster Review* side by side with another frequently heard in modern controversy. It is frequently said that there is no mean between absolute unbelief and the Roman Catholic Church.

This belief is widely held, and accounts for the numerous secessions that constantly take place from the Church of England to the Church of Rome. Many of those who have gone over are men of great ability, whose secession cannot be ascribed to weakness or credulity. The statement that there is no logical mean between unbelief and

going over to the Roman Catholic Church would be true if there were any place in true theology for the premisses of materialism; but there is not. The statement of Roman Catholics that there is no logical mean between atheism and their Church is explained by the statement of the *Westminster Review*. The popular theology—in which we must for this one occasion count that of the Roman Catholic Church—includes in its doctrine the two theories of materialism and idealism. In other words, popular theology is idealistic dualism, while scriptural theology is idealistic monism. But the theory of idealistic dualism is self-contradictory. The two dogmas that are included in the popular theology are—as the writer in the *Westminster Review* points out—irreconcilable. They cannot be reconciled by reason; and as they cannot be so reconciled, the Church of Rome substitutes authority for reason. This is the meaning of the statement so frequently met with in current controversy, that there is no logical mean between atheism and joining the Roman Catholic Church. The answer, of course, is simple. It is quite true that reason cannot reconcile idealism and materialism in theology; but reason can reject materialism absolutely, and that is the solution of the problem. It is not, therefore, necessary to be either an atheist or a Roman Catholic in order to preserve one's logical consistency. When, however, the Church of

Rome says that all men who profess to believe the doctrine of the Church of England are bound, if they wish to maintain their logical consistency, to go over to her communion, she says what is true. Some of the deep thinkers of the Church of England—as, for example, Cardinal Newman—have felt this truth, and have accordingly gone over; but, as a rule, Protestant theologians—like Liberal politicians—don't trouble themselves much about logical consistency.

This, of course, only applies to the clergy, and not to the laity. It only applies to those who claim authority to teach the Word of God. The Bible is addressed by God directly to individual men and women, who are prohibited in the writings of St. Peter from applying to it any private—that is to say, any sectarian interpretation.

The presence of the two metaphysical factors of idealism and materialism in current theological problems is accounted for by the law of evolution. The theological idea in the consciousness of mankind is subject to the law of evolution. In the embryonic state of the theological idea in the infancy of mankind its forms were grotesque. This has been pointed out by some modern writers of distinction, including, we believe, Mr. Herbert Spencer. Being subject to the law of evolution, the theological idea in the consciousness of mankind must pass through its appointed stages. It must pass through absolute materialism and

idealistic dualism to absolute idealism. Individuals are not bound by this law of evolution. They can soar above it, and the greatest thinkers of every age have soared above it, notably the great Hebrew patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, who have handed down to us in Scripture the great ethical and spiritual truths of Christianity. In the aggregate mind of the race at large, however, the theological idea is subject to the law of evolution, and the shedding by that idea of the crust of materialism is a process that requires scores of centuries for its completion. The theology of the New Testament is pure idealism; but the germ of the coming materialism can easily be detected in the metaphysical Scriptures, such as the fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The dispensation of materialism, or materialistic monism, culminated at the Reformation. The dispensation of idealistic dualism then set in, and is still with us. Current controversy, as expressed in such writings as the Bampton Lectures of the Bishop of London, alluded to at the beginning of this chapter, make it not unreasonable to hope that in the European Church the dispensation of idealistic monism, which must in the nature of things be the final dispensation, may set in about two or three thousand years hence. A Church like the existing Protestant Churches that express a transition stage in theology, must always be

more or less in the position of the Church of the Laodiceans. At one time they will be hot towards materialism and ecclesiastical authority, and cold towards idealism and common sense. At another they will be hot towards idealism and reason, and cold towards materialism and sacramental magic. The consequence is that their temperature is one of perpetual lukewarmness towards truth. In the parables of Christ we are commanded by His example to seek for ethical and spiritual analogies in the domain of natural truth that is now cultivated by physical science. A close analogy between the relation of materialism to idealism in theology is furnished by that of the Ptolemaic to the Copernican theory in astronomy. This analogy is very close, not only as a whole, but in many practical details. To mention one. The Copernican theory in astronomy as compared with the Ptolemaic, and the idealistic theory in metaphysics as compared with the materialistic convey to superficial minds the idea of instability; but the idea is erroneous, in both cases. Unfortunately, however, this idea of instability makes the idealistic theory an easy subject of ridicule. In current literature, especially the lighter periodicals and fiction of the day, a great deal of very poor wit is launched at isolated fragments of the idealistic theory. Ridicule is a powerful weapon, but it has never in the long run proved an efficient weapon against truth. The idealistic

theory is very defenceless against ridicule, for this reason, that the folly of the ridicule itself can only be appreciated by those who can grasp the idealistic theory as a whole, and this the great majority of mankind—including those who make fun of the theory—are unable to do. Lord Byron disposed of Berkeley's arguments with a sneer. He showed his wisdom in doing so, as he would have found it difficult to dispose of them by reasoning. Another popular way of refuting Berkeley's teaching is to say that no man who had ever knocked his head against a stone wall could remain an idealist. This is a powerful argument for the simple reason that those who make use of it are themselves intellectually outside of the frontier within which reason and logic reign. This, however, is a digression. We are treating now of the analogy between the relations of the Ptolemaic to the Copernican astronomy, and those of the materialistic to the idealistic theory in theology. As we were saying, much very poor wit is launched at the idealistic theory in metaphysics by novelists, magazine writers, and others who are intellectually incapable of understanding it. Also, the idealistic theory does lend itself to ridicule when its component parts are taken separately. A theory which turns this apparently solid world of hard practical realities into the baseless fabric of a vision, a shadow, a dream, an idea, a vapour, a vesture that can be folded up

and put away, seems, and must ever continue to seem, "foolishness" to the young, the hardy, the vigorous, the athletic, and the brutally animal, in a word, to the great majority of mankind. This, however, does not prevent the theory itself from being true. It is the fundamental dogma of scriptural revelation, is taught by Christ and His Apostles; and even many of those who scoff at it in youth and health would hesitate to do so when they find themselves within measurable distance of the grave. To superficial thinkers, as has been already observed, the idealistic theory, as compared with the materialistic, carries with it the idea of instability, and the same is true of the Copernican theory in astronomy, as compared with the Ptolemaic. In both cases the absolute or noumenal theory, as compared with the relative or phenomenal theory, does not make the slightest practical difference. Practically the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, just as he did in the days before the Copernican astronomy was heard of. So also, if a man dashes his head against a stone wall, it will be no consolation to him to know that the stone wall is only a fabric of a vision, for his head is also a bit of the fabric of the same vision, and if the whole proceeding is a dream, it is at least a dream that has all the practical force of reality. This suggests the answer to those who use what may be called the

stone wall argument against idealism. The agony of knocking our head against a stone wall is not greater than that of a bad dream, and only appears so to us because we have the opportunity when we awake of contrasting what we call its "unreality" with what we term the "reality" of daily life. But suppose this opportunity did not occur. In fact it does occur, but we can imagine its not taking place. The stone wall argument would then be equally valid against a man suffering from nightmare, who should try to persuade himself that his horrible dream was not real, but was only a vision. Our dreams seem to us unreal and visionary only because we have the opportunity of contrasting them with what we call real life. It is easy to conceive the non-existence of this opportunity, and then our dreams would become to us to all intents and purposes real life. Even the inconsistencies, contradictions, and anomalies of dreams would not be so regarded were it not for the opportunity that comes afterwards of contrasting them with the rigid mathematical consistency and logic of the conditions of daily life. It is also possible to conceive a dream lasting for ever. Such a dream would be to all intents and purposes eternal life. The true analogy of death therefore is that of the passage of the individual human mind from one dream to another. It is not an act of physical locomotion in three-dimensioned physical space performed by a concrete material entity

called the soul. This is how death is spoken of in the language of the popular theology, but it is, in fact, materialism run mad. It is not Scripture, but scholastic misinterpretation of Scripture. There are passages of Scripture that are susceptible of corruption to this meaning, but this meaning is attached to them by the scholastic idolatry in defiance of the ethical teaching of the Scriptures themselves. The true analogy of death is that of the passage of the human mind from one dream to another. The body that at death returns to the dust from whence it was taken is a part of the old dream. It is no more real than the visionary bodies that clothe our own personalities and those of the mysterious visitors whom we meet when we wander in dreamland in the watches of the night. The visionary bodies that we wear in dreams cease to exist when we awake, but this is not true of our mortal bodies. The latter, it is true, cease to exist as bodies because they are resolved into their elements; but they continue to exist as elements. The explanation of this is simple. The resemblance between dream life and real life is analogy. If we wish to change it into identity we must develop the idea of the dream by adding to it the conditions which it does not possess, but which the other does possess. The visions of the night are limited to the individual. No one shares them with him. In the vision called real life the individual plays a very small part indeed. The

conditions are therefore different, and must be determined differently. In dreamland the conditions may be determined with reference to the individual alone. In real life they must be determined with reference to the whole of the created consciousness that exists on earth. The body, therefore, which a man wears on earth does not belong exclusively to himself. It is also part of the furniture, so to speak, of other men's dreams. It must, therefore, remain on earth when the man himself exchanges the dream of mortality for that of immortality. If the man's body disappeared at the same time as the man himself, the world would be in appearance, as well as in reality, a vision. This it has pleased God that it shall not be. Although this world is in reality nothing but a phenomenon, a vision, and a shadow, it has nevertheless pleased God to give it all the appearance of reality. The instrument by which this is done is natural law, illustrating, symbolizing, and expressing logical or mathematical consistency. Any violation of the ordained and sustained order, suggesting the idea of caprice, would also detract from the appearance of reality that is worn by the conditions of earthly existence. God maintains the appearance of earthly reality by maintaining the rigid and impartial uniformity of nature.

The uniformity of nature, expressing as it does in all phenomena one uniform principle of logical and mathematical consistency, is the instrument

by means of which God gives to a visionary universe that appearance which men call "reality." The natural laws by which the processes of the human mind are governed, cause the orderly succession of phenomena to produce upon men's minds the impression that that succession is automatic, and that each phenomenon, or rather, that the matter that constitutes and is, as it were, the raw material of each phenomenon, possesses in itself a power or "potency" to cause the phenomenon that comes next in the programme to succeed it. This is, in fact, the creed of the materialists, and it coincides with the appearance of things, but not with the reality.

Paradoxical as it may sound, it is nevertheless a fact, as may be gathered from the foregoing remarks, that so-called atheists and materialists are unconsciously paying the most sincere of all possible compliments to the awful power of the imagination of God when they deny His existence. It is the will of God that natural phenomena should wear the appearance of being unconscious, impersonal, and automatic. No better witness, therefore, to the perfection with which He produces the desired result can be produced than that of men who honestly believe that natural phenomena are, as a matter of fact, unconscious, impersonal, and automatic.

We sometimes find minds possessed by the delusion of materialism, from which we might

have expected better things. Mr. James Anthony Froude, for example, and the late Mr. Thomas Carlyle, as is related in the life of the latter by the former, were much perplexed by the fact, as they imagined it, that God "does nothing." Evidently Mr. Froude and Mr. Thomas Carlyle obtained their theological ideas from a Protestant Church, and not from Scripture. This curious notion of theirs, however, shows very clearly the difference between scriptural idealism and ecclesiastical materialism. According to the latter, matter does everything and God "does nothing." According to the former, matter does nothing and God does everything. The connection, also, of the subject of the difference between materialism and idealism with the subject of the ecclesiastical exegesis of miracle, will not escape the student of scientific theology. A miracle, in the popular acceptation of the term, can convey no evidence of Divine action, for as God does all things, He cannot reveal Himself more in an abnormal than in a normal phenomenon. It is the element of materialism in ecclesiastical teaching that makes possible its erroneous doctrine of miracles. As, according to the teaching of the Church, matter does everything and God does nothing, God can, of course, occasionally reveal Himself by interfering capriciously with the doings of matter. If, however, as the idealism of Scripture teaches, matter does nothing and God does everything, God cannot reveal himself by

occasionally causing material phenomena to assume abnormal forms. He may, however, by temporarily allowing the belief that He has done so to prevail, draw attention to the ethical and spiritual teaching of the messengers whom He sends upon the earth. The miracles could not in the nature of things carry Divine credentials even if they had actually occurred; but temporary belief in miracles has, as a matter of fact, drawn attention to ethical and spiritual teaching that carries its own Divine credentials within itself.

The student of scientific theology should not allow himself to forget the stupendous negation that is involved in the ecclesiastical doctrine of miracles. The doctrine has no meaning unless we accept the creed of the materialists, that matter does everything and that God does nothing.

This unconscious and hidden, but implied, negation in ecclesiastical doctrine is the seed which, by the natural law of metaphysical botany referred to in a former chapter, produces as its fruit the scepticism, atheism, and infidelity that are sapping the foundations of Western civilization. It is the same law of metaphysical botany that is referred to by Christ in that passage where He tells His disciples that they cannot expect to gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles.

There is a deep ethical question involved in the scholastic doctrine of miracles. A distinguished writer of the English Church, the late Canon

Mozley, has laid it down that there is nothing immoral in a miracle. This is true if we regard the act called a miracle as an isolated action. In the same way there might be nothing wrong in a particular human action done by a human being; but if the whole character and conduct of that human being had been persistently directed towards the end of producing on our minds the impression that he never had done that particular action, even though he had never told us in articulate language that he had not done it, the action would be immoral. God has never said in articulate language that he has not worked miracles, but His actions in nature all tend to produce that impression upon the human mind. Dr. Mozley's contention, therefore, that there is nothing immoral in a miracle, is one of the component errors of the larger compound error of the scholastic materialism.

We have dwelt at some length on the subject of materialism in theology because the science of theology is an organic unit, so to speak; and an error anywhere has a tendency to propagate itself in every department of the science, the ethical as well as the intellectual. The question of materialism or idealism is closely connected with every branch of theology, and especially with ethics, so that there is a peculiar appropriateness in dwelling on it in a work devoted to the subject of the immorality of idolatry. Materialism is true as a working hypothesis, just as the Ptolemaic astronomy is

true as a working hypothesis. Practically the sun rises in the east and sets in the west; and practically the acorn possesses in itself a "potency" to evolve the oak, and generally phenomena are caused by those that precede, and are themselves the causes of those which follow them. In absolute fact, however, neither of these hypotheses is true. Matter possesses no "potency" whatever; and this planet, on the surface of which we are permitted to crawl for a brief period, spins upon its axis and revolves round the sun.

Another analogy between the astronomical and metaphysical theories relates to the awful vastness of the conceptions of the works of God that are opened up by the Copernican theory in astronomy and by the theory of idealism in metaphysics, as compared respectively with the Ptolemaic astronomy and materialistic theology.

The Copernican astronomy opens up to the imagination of mankind the idea of myriads of worlds existing within the boundaries of three-dimensioned space; and, similarly, the dogma of idealism in theology opens up the idea of myriads of universes, each equal to this one as regards the attribute of infinite space. As the Copernican astronomy multiplies this world by infinity, so idealistic theology multiplies the universe itself by infinity. The former expresses numerical infinity in worlds, the latter in universes. The physical theory raises the finite to the dimensions of the

infinite; the metaphysical raises the infinite itself to the Nth power of the infinite. There is, therefore, plenty of room for the "many mansions" of the Gospel. All these universes and worlds are kept in existence, and all the life and motion among, upon and in them, and in every way connected with them are maintained by the mere power of the imagination of God.

This is the meaning of the epithet "Almighty" applied to Jehovah in the Hebrew Scriptures. It does not mean that God has the power of acting capriciously, of doing what He ought not to do, or of contradicting Himself. The Scriptures tell us that with God all things are possible, but this does not mean that it is possible for God to yield to caprice, to violate His own laws, or otherwise contradict Himself. There are two kinds of impossibility, physical impossibility and ethical impossibility. An example of physical impossibility is the impossibility which prevents a man from being in two places at the same time. This form of impossibility has no sense as applied to God, and this is one of the meanings of saying that with God all things are possible. Ethical impossibility does apply to God. An example of ethical impossibility in human affairs is the impossibility which would debar many men from becoming Liberal Members of Parliament, or taking orders in the Church of England.

It will be seen that the idealism of Scripture sweeps

away one objection raised by the materialists to the doctrine of a life beyond the grave. Materialists object to the doctrine of a life hereafter on the ground that there is no *locus*, no place, no space available for a kingdom of heaven, or spiritual kingdom, because this infinite physical universe already monopolizes all the *locus*, all the place and space that exist. This objection *is* actually raised, and is stated with great clearness and precision in the works of the various philosophical sects that express the different forms of the fundamental error of materialism. Some writers in the *North American Review* have enunciated this objection with much dogmatic determination. Idealism disposes of it in a flash. The Being who by the mere power of His imagination, or, to use the more technical terms, consciousness and volition, can maintain in permanent existence and stability such an infinite vision of beauty and wonder as this marvellous universe, must be able to multiply that mental action to any extent that may be required. It will be seen also that, in the light of scriptural idealism, belief in a life hereafter involves no intellectual difficulty. While the scholastic materialism puts all manner of intellectual difficulties in the path of Christian believers, the idealism of Scripture not only removes them, but hands them over to the sceptics. No man who is intellectually capable of grasping the meaning of Berkeley's axiom can possibly entertain a doubt of the truth

of scriptural revelation. His belief, also, will not be of the kind that is generated by false sentiment, or cant, or what is erroneously termed "piety" or "goodness." It will rest upon the same foundation as his belief in the truths of mathematics.

The principle of idealism in theology makes it necessary to take of the phenomena of human history a view other than the conventional one. According to the popular view, which is based on materialism, these are all brought about by human design as well as by human agency. According to Scripture, the teaching of which is based on idealism, they are brought about by Divine design, purpose, and intention guiding the Divine volition. The human agents are mere puppets, having no more real power over the destinies of the world they inhabit than so many marionettes. This view is also demonstrably true apart from all considerations of theology, idealism, and Scripture. Practically, therefore, human history is a tragedy or a comedy according to the view we take of it; and the men and women, whose thoughts and actions are expressed in its phenomena, are merely players. It may be remarked here that materialism and idealism take different views of the deeper thoughts of the poets. If a great poet writes that the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players, materialism thinks the idea merely a pretty conceit, offers a little supercilious sentiment as incense to it, and then forgets it. Idealism

recognizes that it is a profound scientific truth that contains the key to the solution of many of the most perplexing problems of statesmanship. It follows from the above fact, that the men and women who are the players in the great drama of human history must have had their parts assigned to them by God. They are not, therefore, in the sight of God what they are in our eyes. The kings and emperors, the great and small of this world, must all be equally insignificant in the sight of God. The pride, therefore, with which the former often look down on the latter is contrary to common sense. Of course, for that very reason it is a part of the comedy of human life; but still it is well to remember that it is, in fact, contrary to common sense. It is contrary to common sense, and it is at the same time contrary to the ethics of Christianity. Idealism, accordingly, enables those who understand it to perceive that the ethics of Christianity are merely consecrated common sense. This again establishes a connection between Christianity and modern science. The latter is organized common sense; the former is consecrated common sense; and the element of common sense belongs to both.

It also follows that the different sorts and conditions of men, and differences of rank and class between different men, are all of the Divine ordering. This truth is also taught by the Church; but as in her teaching it is a mere sentiment, it is easily

pushed aside by Liberal politicians engaged in the congenial task of "levelling down." This affords an example of the injury that is done to the community by the action of the Church in separating in the popular mind the ideas of God and Divine will and ordering from the idea of the natural causation of the universe. It will be remembered that it has also been explained that this separation of ideas is a breach of the First Commandment of the Decalogue. Thus, the sin of idolatry in the Church is visited on the whole community.

Inequality among men is maintained by natural laws, and must therefore be of the Divine ordering. Social inequality presses hard occasionally on individuals and on classes, but it can never be done away with; and all attempts to do away with it add enormously to the sum of human misery and suffering. They set class against class, and make national peace, happiness, and prosperity an impossibility. It is part of the "creed" of English Liberalism that the way to govern a nation is to set the classes against the masses. This teaching bears to that of Christ the same relationship that the idea expressed by the word "black" bears to the idea expressed by the word "white," so that we apply a correct name to Liberalism when we call it the antichrist of politics.

We have now touched on a few of the points where idealism in theology affects questions of ethics. Our

object here is to show that the moral law of God rests on the natural law of the universe, and cannot be permanently broken with impunity by either Church or State; and also that in order to see clearly that this is a fact, and why it must be a fact, it is necessary to get a firm intellectual grip, so to speak, of the metaphysical principle of idealism. It is essential also that the student of scientific theology should learn to see the moral significance of natural causation. If a merchant habitually proves untrustworthy his customers leave him. This is natural causation. The minds of the customers act in obedience to natural laws. If a Church in her theological doctrine substitutes artificial for scriptural theology she undergoes a process of disintegration ; that is to say, she becomes broken up into sects. This, again, is natural causation. Men's minds act in obedience to natural law in matters of religion as in all other matters. There are many people who would exclaim at the bad taste of comparing a Church that teaches an artificial theology to an untrustworthy merchant. The answer is, that while the principle of natural causation is identical in both cases, it is universally recognized in the case of the merchant, but is never recognized in the case of the Church. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to insist upon this true analogy whether the taste of it be good or bad.

Again, as the mission of the Church is of far

greater importance than that of the merchant, intellectual disingenuousness on her part is a far greater crime than the other. Again, people who cry out against true analogies on the score of taste are unconsciously but necessarily enemies of truth, morality, and of religion, for scriptural revelation consists exclusively of analogy; and the claim that analogy is never to be used when it shocks good manners, amounts logically to a demand that all scriptural ethical revelation shall be set aside; as in the management of all the public business of this country, secular and religious, it now in fact is. Besides, in this analogy we do not compare the Church to a merchant. We speak neither of the Church nor the merchant, but of a natural law of the universe which affects both in a similar way, which we affirm to be the same natural law in both cases, and in both cases to be an example of the moral government of the world by natural law. Natural causation carries out a similar moral purpose in the domain of politics.

It is questionable if the ingenuity of man could invent a more immoral system of government than government by party. Now, at the close of the year 1887, it has brought the British empire to the verge of destruction. There is a moral purpose in this. It is part of the moral government of the world by natural laws, and as, according to Hebrew theology, natural causation is God, it coincides with what is called in the Psalms the "judgments" of God.

The judgments of God are far above out of the sight of theological and political materialism; but they can be dimly discerned in the dry light of idealism.

Another great error in the popular theology due to materialism is the assumption of a difference of kind between time and eternity. Men are said to be launched at death into eternity. There is no sense in this language. Men are as much in eternity before as they will be after death. If we compare this existence to a ship floating on the waters of eternity, the popular language seems to imply that at death we shall be thrown overboard. This is not what Scripture teaches. If we retain the metaphor, what Scripture teaches is that at death we shall be taken on board another ship. We shall float upon the waters of eternity then as we float upon them now, and in safety then as now. Of course the popular language is technically justifiable.

We may call one side of the valley of the shadow of death time, and the other side eternity, on the principle that we call one side of the Thames Middlesex, and the other Surrey; but on no other principle.

As Middlesex and Surrey are both parts of England, so time on this side of death, and time on the other side are both parts of eternity. There is no reason to suppose that there is more than one eternity for God's creatures, whether human being, angel, or spirit. What we call time is a fraction of eternity. It is, however, reasonable to

believe that there is another eternity, which is the eternity of God himself. Thus there are two conceivable eternities which, in the technical language of metaphysics, may be termed phenomenal eternity and noumenal eternity. Phenomenal eternity is limitless time, noumenal eternity is the non-existence of time. Noumenal eternity is dimly hinted at in that passage of the book of Revelation in which the angel standing on earth and sea declares "that there should be time no longer."*

Time, it is to be remembered, is really called into being by the instruments that measure it. God, therefore, is the creator of time as He is the creator of space. The eternity, therefore, of God, cannot be called limitless time, but must be defined as the non-existence of time. As the Psalmist says, a thousand years in his sight are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. Time is only called into being by the instruments that measure it. If it were not for the succession of phenomena that measure time, we should have no idea or conception of time.

The student of scientific theology who wishes to understand thoroughly the difference between materialism and idealism will find it a great help to get a clear apprehension of the distinction between noumenon and phenomenon. Materialism might be defined as the negation of, or the ignoring of, the distinction between noumenon and phenomenon.

* Revelation, x. 6.

The theology which recognizes this distinction is properly called idealism, because it resolves the universe into a vision or dream. Matter then becomes a form of idea, or mind stuff. Some great minds of modern days, even among the materialists themselves—the late Professor William Kingdon Clifford may be cited as an example—have got a kind of half hold of this idea, and have attempted to grapple with it.

They have, however, never succeeded, nor is it in the nature of things possible that they ever can succeed, simply because they *are* materialists. Their idea, so far as it can be arrived at by comparing the statements of one materialist with those of another, is that matter not only contains within itself a power or "potency" to reproduce and develop itself after its kind, but also possesses a power or "potency" to produce and develop consciousness. In fact, they account for the existence of consciousness, or mind as they account for the evolution of matter; but our confidence in the correctness of their conclusions as regards mind is not strengthened by our knowledge of the fact that even as regards matter they are wrong. Sometimes the term monism is used in current literature to denote idealism. This has already been explained. The idealistic idea in theology, in its growth and development in the human mind, has to pass through the regular stages of evolution, and must pass through dualism to reach monism. There is, however, no true idealism except monism.

It is the dual element in the idealism of the existing Protestant Churches that makes their union an impossibility, and must continue to make it so as long as the dual element lasts. They are ready to fly at each other's throats about doctrines all of which treat matter as noumenal instead of phenomenal. Their doctrines are each and all of them erroneous, and are taught—though unconsciously so of course—in defiance of the ethics of Christianity. They are all of them conclusions drawn by bastard rationalism from untenable premisses. We have already explained what is meant by the phenomenality of matter. As, however, this is one of the most fundamental axioms of theology, and also as the idea is not at first an easy one to grasp, though afterwards one marvels how one ever could have missed it, frequent repetitions of the explanation may be pardoned; we shall accordingly explain it once more. Matter is phenomenal and is not noumenal. That is to say, it is not real, but only apparently real.

Real reality, or noumenality, is the attribute of that which is self-existing, or exists independently of all minds, human or divine. Phenomenality, or apparent reality, is the attribute of that which has no independent existence, but requires, to keep it in existence, the action of a cognizing mind by which it is held in cognition; and it can exist only so long as it is so held in cognition. Thus the phenomenality of the matter that we see in dreams is self-evident. Obviously, the material phenomena

of a dream exist as apparent realities only so long as they are held in cognition by the cognizing mind of the dreamer. The theory of idealism extends the same principle to the phenomena of the external universe.

Like the phenomena of a dream, they too can only exist when held in cognition by a cognizing mind. If they could be separated as objects of cognition from all consciousness whatsoever, including the consciousness of the Creator, they would cease to exist as the phenomena of a dream cease to exist when the dreamer awakes. Besides the example of a dream, the example of a mirror serves to illustrate the phenomenality of matter. When we look into a mirror we see material objects at the back of the mirror. You will perhaps say, "Oh, those are only the reflections of the objects in the room"; but in metaphysical science we must guard against being deceived by words. What *is* a "reflection"? It is a term invented to hide our own ignorance. All we know is that if, under certain conditions, we look into a mirror, we see physical objects inside, or at the back of the glass, which have all the appearance of reality, but which our reason tells us are not really real, but only apparently real. The point, however, at which we want to arrive is this. Do the objects that we see in the looking-glass when we are in a room remain there after we have left the room? Of course the reflection of our

own person does not remain, but do the other objects remain? Do the tables, and chairs, and flowers, and pictures, and ornaments remain? Idealism in theology shows the Creator in very close connection with all His works. As the existence of matter is the result of Divine consciousness, and the movement of phenomena of the Divine volition, it follows that the contact of the Creator with His works is practically an organic contact. That view of the relationship of God to man and to his visible works which localizes God in physical space, and then places him very far off, belongs to the scholastic materialism of the Church, and not to the idealism of Scripture. All the "intellectual" difficulties in the way of theological belief of which we hear so much in these days are generated by ecclesiastical materialism. The unbelief of men who do not believe in God is not caused by excess of intellect on their part, but by deficiency of common sense.

This is also the teaching of Scripture. It is not the man of great intellect that has said in his heart there is no God, but the "foolish body."* The materialism of the Church has much to answer for. The Church is very angry with philosophers who deny the existence of the human soul because they have searched for it with a microscope and have failed to find it; but the language habitually used by the popular theology on this subject

* Psalms, liii. 1.

justifies the action of the philosophers. The true analogy of death is the exchange by a dreamer of one dream for another. The poet was not giving utterance to a mere pretty sentiment, but to a profound scientific truth, when he declared that "we are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." The alarm expressed by Hamlet, is also the expression of the true analogy of death:—

> "To die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream: ay,
> there's the rub;
> For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
> When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

Death may also be compared to an awakening from sleep; but this analogy is really the same as the other, as when we awake from sleep (in the usual sense of the word), in the morning, we really only exchange incoherent dreams for a coherent one.

It may well be that the dreamland on the other side of death is in degree as much more real, or apparently noumenal, than this dreamland, as this dreamland, technically called "real life," is more apparently real than the dreamland of our natural sleep. There is no use in wasting intellectual effort in a futile chase after noumena.* So far as metaphysical science has yet gone, or so far as, to all appearance, it is ever likely to go, the root of the difference between the Creator and His

* This is also affirmed by a distinguished modern writer on metaphysics.

creatures must consist in this, that the latter are all dreamers, while the former alone is awake.

The Creator alone can fully realize what His purposes are, and the best and greatest of His creatures can reasonably hope for no more than to be allowed to pursue truth as a will-of-the-wisp for ever; a pursuit that may be expected to constitute the happiness of eternity. The difference between Creator and creature, which consists in this that while the latter reside in varieties of dreamland and can only see phenomena, or things as they appear to be, the former alone can see noumena, or things as they actually are, must hold equally for all God's creatures, for angels and archangels as well as for human beings.

The metaphysical idea of seeing only phenomena is the idea expressed by the Apostle St. Paul in the phrase about seeing through "a glass darkly"; and the metaphysical idea of seeing noumena is the idea expressed in seeing "face to face." The passage must not be interpreted to mean that men will actually see noumena; but only that their comprehension of phenomena after death will be so much greater in degree than their present comprehension of phenomena as to constitute relatively a seeing of noumena. Thus, if we regard animals as seeing phenomena, we, from our superior knowledge of underlying causes, may regard ourselves as relatively seers of noumena. Again, people advanced in years, for whom life has no longer any

illusions, may be regarded as seers of noumena as compared with the young whose surroundings are visionary. This last analogy, however, suggests the question whether the happiness of heaven may not be just the reverse of that indicated. There is happiness in the pursuit of truth even when we know that truth can never be reached. If, however, we were to choose our own form of happiness we would ask that the illusions of youth should be restored to us, and that they should be made permanent.

The idea of the phenomenality of matter, which is the fundamental dogma of metaphysics and true theology, is not easy to grasp, but when the intelligence has once got hold of it, it cannot let it go. Many men, eminent in other domains of intellectual thought than metaphysics, regard it as "foolishness." We have in a former chapter referred to Mr. St. George Mivart's description of the idealistic dogma as the negation of all that the human reason affirms. Mr. St. George Mivart uses this phrase in a controversy in which he was engaged with Mr. George J. Romanes. The latter, in an article called "The Rights of Reason," that was published in the *Fortnightly Review* of January, 1886, stated the monistic dogma very delicately and gingerly metaphorically speaking as if he were walking on eggs, and in a tone suggestive of the idea that it was a most heretical doctrine. He writes: "If from the little that we understand of the one mode in which we certainly know that mind

does exist we feel impelled to conclude that there is a mode of mind which is not restricted to brain, but co-extensive with motion, and is consubstantial and co-eternal with all that was, and is, and is to come; have we not a suggestion that, high as the heavens are above the earth, so high above our thoughts may be the thoughts of such a mind as this?" This is a statement by Mr. George J. Romanes of the dogma of monism. The only remark that need be made about it here is that it is not only true, but self-evident and axiomatic to every mind that possesses a germ of metaphysical capacity. It is a truth which breathes through the whole of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation; and if it is not stated in plainer language than that in which it is usually expressed, apparently this is the case only because the scriptural teachers and writers assume it to be such a self-evident axiomatic proposition that they never dream of its being necessary to emphasize it. The following passage from the writings of one of the great Hebrew prophets is identical in substance with, but more beautiful in form than, the statement of Mr. George J. Romanes: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

Christ assumes the same statement to be true,

* Isaiah, lv. 8, 9.

and mentions it casually as familiar to His disciples in the allusions in the Sermon on the Mount to the sparrow's fall, the clothing of the lilies of the field, and the numbering of the hairs of the head. St. Paul takes it for granted when he says that in God we live and move and have our being. But, indeed, to quote the scriptural passages where the profound metaphysical truth of idealism is taken for granted, would simply involve quoting the whole Bible from the first verse of the Old Testament to the last verse of the New. Under these circumstances there is something trying to the patience in Mr. George J. Romanes' tone of "Have we not a suggestion?"

It is as if—supposing him to have been discussing the Franco-German War—he had asked, "In the result of the great war of 1870 *have we not a suggestion* that the German army may have been a better military machine than the French?" No, we have not "a suggestion." We have absolute, definite, dogmatic, categorical certainty. The dogma of monism is absolutely true, and would be grasped as categorical, axiomatic, and self-evident by a child of five years old who possessed the germ of a natural aptitude for metaphysics. Of course there are many men of great distinction and great ability in other domains of human thought who do not possess this germ of metaphysical aptitude. Notably is this true of men who have shown great ability as lawyers or in the

domain of physical science. Both these classes of men are compelled by the nature of their subjects to treat phenomena as noumena, and they are, therefore, the worst authorities that could be cited on questions of the concrete details of scientific metaphysics and theology. On the other hand, they are often first-rate authorities on the questions of what abstract truth is and what it is not, as we have seen in the matter of the controversy between Mr. Gladstone and Professor Huxley. On matters, however, of the concrete details of scientific theology, scientific ethics—as witness the case of Mr. Leslie Stephen—and scientific metaphysics, their authority is valueless. It is impossible to imagine an axiom which, to the mind of a competent metaphysician, is more self-evident than the theory of Bishop Berkeley, which culminates necessarily in the dogma of monism so clearly stated in the passage quoted above from the writings of Mr. Romanes. The quotation itself is taken, as has been explained, from an essay by Mr. St. George Mivart who quotes it, not in approval, but on the contrary, in a tone of scorn and contempt. This is what Mr. St. George Mivart has to say of the principle of idealism—a principle, let us once more remind our readers, which is assumed to be true throughout the whole of the Scriptures, which is affirmed in the clearest language by the great Hebrew prophets, by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount and in the parables,

and by St. Paul and the other Apostles, and of which it may be said that if it be not true, then the Bible has and can have no possible meaning. Mr. St. George Mivart comments on Mr. George J. Romanes' definition of idealism that has been given above, as follows: "This passage has, at least, a strongly theistic sound. . . . It is amusing to find this very old notion given forth as if it was a new discovery, and to have offered us once more the absolute negation of all that one's reason most certainly affirms as the solution of whatever it may be difficult to understand. For if what we know as thought may be fundamentally what we know as motion, then any one thing whatever may be any other thing whatever, and all reasoning is but so much waste of time." This is criticism that is itself open to criticism. Mr. St. George Mivart's criticism is to this effect: "For if what we know as 'A' may be fundamentally what we know as 'B,' then any one thing whatever"—as, for example, C—"may be any other thing whatever"—as, for example, D, E, F, X, Y, Z, and the rest—"and all reasoning is but so much waste of time." This reasoning is erroneous. The conclusion depends upon what A may be, and what B may be. In the actual case before us it depends upon what thought may be and what motion may be. In the fact, which seems to annoy Mr. St. George Mivart so much, that we are now having "this very old notion given forth as if it was a new discovery,"

"have we not a suggestion," as Mr. George Romanes would say, that it would have been wise to have clung to "this very old notion" all along? It is precisely because we have abandoned "this very old notion," which was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be absolutely true, and substituted for this very old notion, which Mr. St. George Mivart calls "the absolute negation of all that one's reason most certainly affirms," such simple and intelligible scholastic dogmas as, for example, the dogma of transubstantiation (which Mr. St. George Mivart would probably call the absolute affirmation of all that one's reason most certainly affirms), that European civilization finds itself landed to-day in the quagmire of theological scepticism and political anarchy that threatens to engulf it.

At least Mr. St. George Mivart's criticism of idealism suggests the thought that if the prophecy attributed to Jesus of Nazareth in the writings of Clement of Alexandria is to come true,* and finality in theological evolution is to be the offspring of a marriage between modern science and the theology of the Church of Rome, the representatives of the former, by whom the latter august Church is to be wooed and won, must be sought for outside of and not inside her communion.

"For if," writes Mr. St. George Mivart, "what we know as thought may be fundamentally what

* See Preface.

we know as motion, then any one thing whatever may be any other thing whatever, and all reasoning is but so much waste of time." This reasoning is erroneous. It is not universally true. It might be true in a given case, for it entirely depends on what the first two things are. In this connection it is worthy of notice that the discoveries of modern science have in a large measure assumed the form of proving this very thing—namely, that what we know as one thing may be fundamentally what we know as another. Experts in physical science are conversant with the details which appear to be practically innumerable. What we know as heat, for example, appears to be fundamentally what we know as motion; and indeed generally, what we know as one force of nature appears to be fundamentally any other force of nature we please. Now if—as idealism affirms—all the forces of nature are simply different forms or modes of thought of the Spirit of God, all the marvellous possibilities discovered by physical science, of transformation between the different natural forces is satisfactorily accounted for. But this is what the forces of nature, in fact, are; for in addition to the positive proof afforded by idealism that they are this, there must always remain the negative demonstration implied in the question, What else can they possibly be? There is, therefore, nothing unreasonable in the idea of Mr. George J. Romanes that "what we know as

thought may be fundamentally what we know as motion." Thought in the human mind is invariably accompanied by motion among the physical particles of the brain. Here we have, at least, companionship between thought and motion, if not positive proof that they are the same thing. We cannot, however, now refer to the parallelism between the thoughts of the human consciousness and the motion of the physical particles of the human brain as it is time to bring this chapter to an end.

The difference between materialism and idealism in theology is the difference between idolatry and Christianity. The prohibition of idolatry in the Mosaic Decalogue is not limited to the idolatry that worships graven images that are actually carved out of material substances such as wood and stone, or gold, silver or bronze. The prohibition includes prohibition of the idolatry that worships, or consecrates as Divine, conceptions, ideas, or theories respecting the invisible God that are manifestly false. All conceptions and theories respecting the invisible God based on Biblical exegesis that interpret literally those metaphorical passages of Scripture where God is spoken of as appearing in a visible form and localized in three-dimensioned space are negations by implication of the Divine infinity and must, therefore, necessarily be false. They are also materialism, for in the metaphorical passages referred to the attributes with

which God is endowed are the attributes of matter. Nor is it prudent to make light of the difference between Christianity and idolatry. The fact cannot be done away with that idolatry is prohibited in the same moral code of Scripture that prohibits murder, adultery, and stealing. Idolatry, therefore, is related to Christianity as adultery is related to chastity.

The political dogma, accordingly, of "religious equality," so dear to English Liberalism, is equivalent to a dogma that chastity and adultery are equal to each other. A so-called "theology" is not necessarily Christianity because it is expressed in the scriptural vocabulary. A false doctrine taught as Christianity involves the double immorality involved in teaching untruth and taking the name of God in vain. This double immorality constitutes the immorality of idolatry.

Materialism in theology is also closely allied to anthropomorphism. It may be described as the inversion of the teaching of Genesis. We are told in Genesis that man is made in the image of God. The inversion of this truth is idolatry. The Church makes God in the image of man when she materializes Him, and assigns Him a distant habitation in some undefined corner of space. Ecclesiastics who teach such doctrines should join the Church of Rome. It is conceivable that materialism may be true, and it is conceivable that idealism may be true; but it is inconceivable that

they can both be true. It is conceivable that a verbal interpretation of Scripture may be true, and it is conceivable that an allegorical interpretation of Scripture may be true; but it is inconceivable that they can both be true. The good, honest materialism and verbalism of the Church of Rome are worthy of all respect; but a Church that cannot make up her mind between authority and reason, between verbalism and allegory, between materialism and idealism, is not worthy of all respect.

"And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write; these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Revelation, iii. 14, 15, 16.)

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